Friday, February 6, 2026 No 37 ₹7

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DH

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The Power of Good

5 Tejas jets ready for delivery to IAF: HAL

Company talking to IAF on supply schedule

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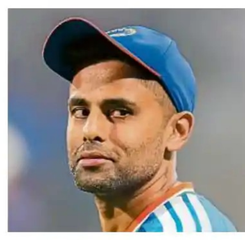
State

Shrinking of B'ghatta ESZ fuelled wildlife conflicts: Report P.4



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ಮಹಾತ್ಮರನ್ನೇ ಬಂಡವಾಳ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡ ನುಂಗಪ್ಪಗಳು !

ಸಿದ್ದಪ್ಪ , ರಾಗಪ್ಪ , ಮಲ್ಲಪ್ಪ ಹಾಗೂ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ನುಂಗಪ್ಪಗಳಿರ,
ನನ್ನ ಹೆಸರಲ್ಲಿ 60 ವರ್ಷ ಲೂಟಿ ಮಾಡಿದ್ದಲ್ಲದೇ,
ನನ್ನ ಗ್ರಾಮ ಸ್ವರಾಜ್ಯ ಕನಸು ನನಸಾಗಿಸಲು
ಮೋದಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರ ಜಾರಿಗೆ ತಂದಿರುವ
VB-G RAM G ಯೋಜನೆ ಕುರಿತು
ಅಪಪ್ರಚಾರ ಮಾಡ್ತಿರಾ ?

ಶ್ರಮಿಕರ ಬದುಕಿಗೆ ಭರವಸೆ ವಿಬಿ-ಜಿ ರಾಮ್ ಜಿ

Viksit Bharat Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin)

ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಮತ್ತು ನ್ಯಾಯಯುತ ವೇತನ ಗ್ರಾಮೀಣ ಕಾರ್ಮಿಕರ ಹಕ್ಕು ಎಂದು ಪ್ರತಿಪಾದಿಸಿ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳನ್ನು 100 ರಿಂದ 125 ದಿನಗಳಿಗೆ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ

ವಿಬಿ-ಜಿ ರಾಮ್ ಜಿ ಅಡಿ ಹದಿನೈದು ದಿನದೊಳಗೆ ಡಿಬಿಟಿ ಮೂಲಕ ವೇತನ ಪಾವತಿಯಾಗಲಿದೆ. ಮನ್ರೇಗಾದಲ್ಲಿ ತಿಂಗಳಾನುಗಟ್ಟಲೆ ವೇತನ ಪಾವತಿಯಾಗುತ್ತಿರಲಿಲ್ಲ

ಗ್ರಾಮ ಸಭೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ನಿರ್ಧಾರವಾಗಿ ಗ್ರಾಮ ಪಂಚಾಯಿತಿಗಳ ಮೂಲಕವೇ ಕೆಲಸಗಳು ನಡೆಯುತ್ತವೆ

ಬಯೋಮೆಟ್ರಿಕ್ ಹಾಜರಾತಿ, ಮೊಬೈಲ್ ಆಧಾರಿತ ಮೇಲ್ವಿಚಾರಣೆ, AI ಡಿಜಿಟಲ್, GPS ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥೆ ಮೂಲಕ ಭ್ರಷ್ಟಾಚಾರಕ್ಕೆ ಕಡಿವಾಣ ಹಾಕಲಾಗಿದೆ

ನಿಗದಿತ ಸಮಯದೊಳಗೆ ಉದ್ಯೋಗ ಸಿಗದಿದ್ದರೆ ನಿರುದ್ಯೋಗ ಭತ್ಯೆ ಪಾವತಿಯಾಗಲಿದೆ

ಮಹಾತ್ಮ ಗಾಂಧೀಜಿಯವರ ರಾಮರಾಜ್ಯದ ಕನಸನ್ನು ವಿಬಿ-ಜಿ ರಾಮ್ ಜಿ ಮೂಲಕ ನನಸು ಮಾಡುವುದೇ ಮೋದಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಸಂಕಲ್ಪವಾಗಿದೆ

➤ ನಕಲಿ ಗಾಂಧಿಗಳಿಂದ ಮಹಾತ್ಮ ಗಾಂಧೀಜಿ ಅವರಿಗೆ ಅವಮಾನ

➤ ಮಹಾತ್ಮರು ಹೇಳಿದ್ದು ಸ್ವಾತಂತ್ರ್ಯ ನಂತರ 'ಕಾಂಗ್ರೆಸ್ ಪಕ್ಷವನ್ನು ವಿಸರ್ಜಿಸಿ ' ಆದರೆ ನುಂಗಪ್ಪಗಳು ಕಾಂಗ್ರೆಸ್ಸನ್ನೇ ' ಬಂಡವಾಳ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡರು !

➤ ಮಹಾತ್ಮ ಗಾಂಧಿ ಅವರ ಕನಸು ಸ್ವಚ್ಛ ಭಾರತ್ ಜಾರಿಗೆ ತಂದಿದ್ದು ನರೇಂದ್ರ ಮೋದಿಜಿ

ಮಹಾತ್ಮ ಗಾಂಧೀಜಿ ಅವರ "ಗ್ರಾಮ ಸ್ವರಾಜ್ಯ" ಕನಸನ್ನು
"ವಿಬಿ-ಜಿ ರಾಮ್ ಜಿ" ಮೂಲಕ ನನಸಾಗಿಸಲು ಪ್ರಧಾನಿ ಶ್ರೀ ನರೇಂದ್ರ ಮೋದಿಜಿ ಅವರಿಂದ ದೃಢ ಹೆಜ್ಜೆ

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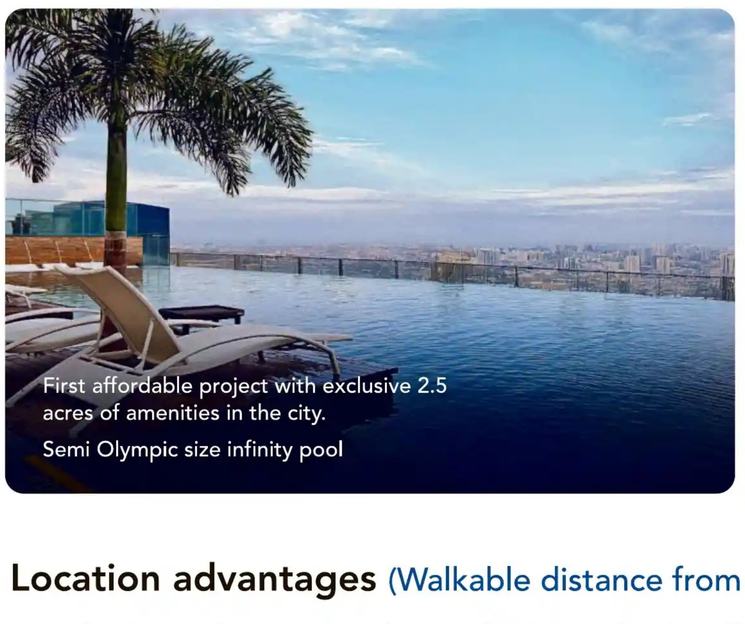

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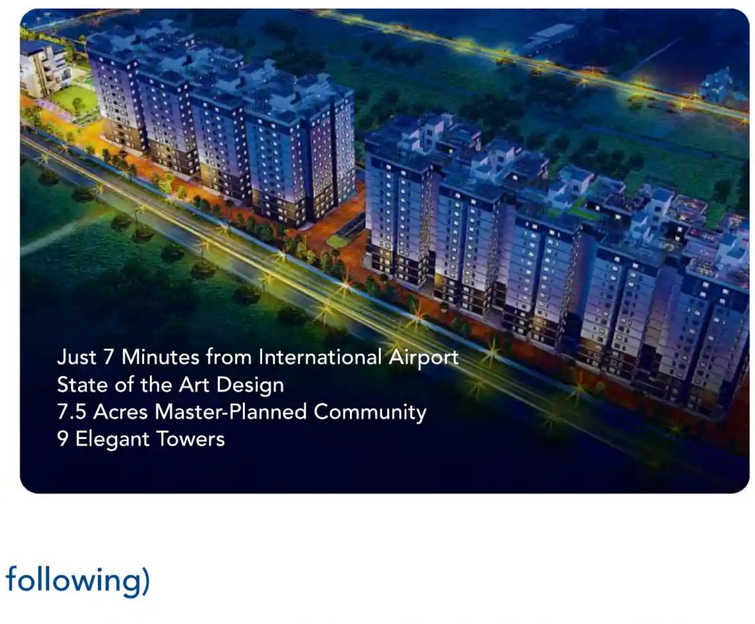

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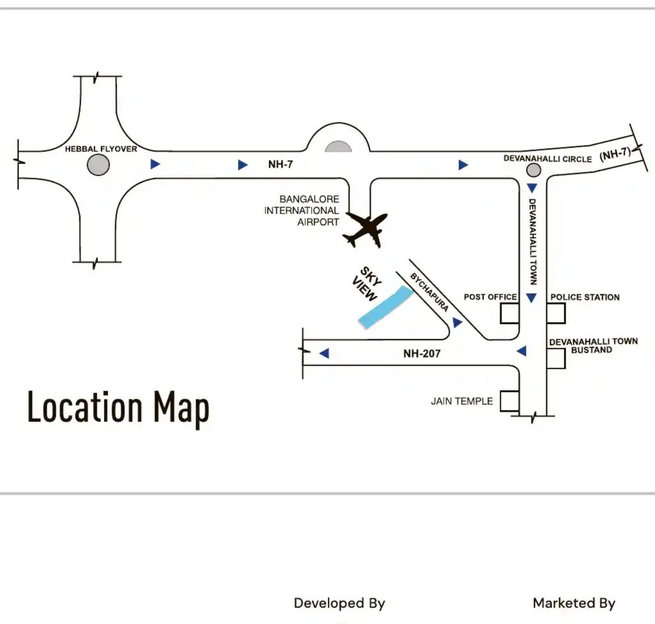

Location Map

Location advantages (Walkable distance from following)

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Page 14

India, US trade deal to be signed by mid-March: Goyal

Joint statement on much-awaited deal in '4-5 days'

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India and the United States are likely to issue a joint statement regarding the trade deal in the next four-five days and the first tranche of the proposed Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA) would be signed by mid-March, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal said on Thursday.

"The first tranche of BTA is almost ready. In the next four to five days a joint statement is expected to be signed between us," the minister said. "Simultaneously a formal agreement is being drafted which may take a month to a month-and-a-half," he added.

According to the minister, a joint statement would pave the way for reduction of US tariff on Indian goods to 18% from the current 50%.

Goyal's statement comes days after US President Donald Trump announced that India and the US have reached a trade deal. The announcement was preceded by strained relations following the imposition of a steep 50% tariff by the Trump administration on Indian goods.

According to Commerce Secretary Rajesh Agrawal, the US can lower its tariff on Indian goods through an executive order. In a social media post earlier this week, Trump announced to cut the tariff on Indian imports to 18%. The executive order in this regard can be issued after the release of the joint statement.

▸ US trade deal, Page 3B

> The first tranche of BTA is almost ready. In the next four to five days a joint statement is expected to be signed between us. Simultaneously a formal agreement is being drafted which may take a month to a month-and-a-half.
>
> **PIYUSH GOYAL,** Commerce Minister

FTA: India, GCC talks on

India and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on Thursday signed the terms of reference (ToR) to relaunch talks on a free trade agreement (FTA), which was suspended in 2011. The negotiations were originally launched in 2004.

Details on Page 11

Modi slams Oppn for 'insulting' President

Poll-bound states find special mention in speech

AMRITA MADHUKALYA
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Setting the tone for the upcoming state assembly polls, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Thursday accused the Opposition of "insulting the President" by disrupting debate on President Murmu's address in the Lok Sabha, and targeted Trinamool Congress, in particular, for moving the Supreme Court to defend "infiltrators" who are snatching "jobs and land of the tribals" in the state.

Lauding the recent trade deals with the EU and the US, Modi, while responding to the debate on the Presidential address in the Rajya Sabha, said that India, with "low inflation and high growth," is rapidly moving towards becoming the third-largest economy and a leading voice of the global south.

Taking potshots at the Congress, Prime Minister Modi said, "Even now, when people speak about them, they don't talk about the trade deals. They talk about deals like the Bofors."

Prime Minister Modi further said that his opponents wish for him to land in his grave, but the blessings of the people of India will see him through.

"They cannot digest how Modi has reached this position, and for them there is only one way out, chant "Modi teri kabr khudegi" (Modi, your grave will be dug)," the prime minister said even as the Opposition walked out of the Upper House demanding the Leader of Opposition in Lok Sabha, Rahul Gandhi, be permitted to make his speech in the Lower House.

▸ Modi, Page 3B

PM IN RAJYA SABHA

They insulted someone who was born in a poor, adivasi family and became the President of India. The Congress is against the poor

- Takes dig at Mamata, and says, "you appear in court in defence of illegal immigrants, who are taking away the rights and jobs of your own people"
- Lauds trade deals with the EU and US, says India, with low inflation and high growth, is rapidly moving towards becoming the third-largest economy
- Honorable MP was called a traitor because he was a Sikh, and this is a display of the enmity against Sikhs present inside the Congress

> It is clear, the world is moving towards a new world order. After the second world war, a world order was created, now the world is moving towards a new global order.
>
> - NARENDRA MODI, Prime Minister

Motion of Thanks passed sans PM's reply

The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the motion of thanks to the President's address to the joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament on January 28 without Prime Minister Narendra Modi's reply for the first time since 2004, amid continuing Opposition protests

Page 6

Cabinet okays Rs 67-cr AI tool to curb fake news

BENGALURU, DHNS: The state Cabinet on Thursday cleared the implementation of a Rs 67.26-crore 'social media analytics solution', an Artificial Intelligence driven software, to verify digital content and posts on social media platforms to prevent spread of fake news.

Sharing details after the Cabinet meeting, Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister H K Patil said since traditional methods have failed to prevent fake news, the government has decided to use AI-driven technology.

This will not just identify fake news and content on digital platforms, but will identify the source, he said.

Details on Page 3D

18 killed in explosion at illegal coal mine in Meghalaya

GUWAHATI, DHNS: At least 18 workers were killed in an explosion in a "rat hole" coal mine in Meghalaya -- once again exposing the state government's failure to stop the problem of illegal and hazardous coal mining.

The police said 18 bodies were recovered at Mynsyngat near Thongsko under Umpleng police outpost in East Jaintia Hills district. A few more workers are still feared trapped inside the mine.

The workers died after fire and smoke engulfed the mine following an explosion inside the coal mine, the police said. The incident came to light on Wednesday when an injured worker was rescued and was rushed to a hospital. Rescue workers, who were rushed to the site, later recovered the bodies. Efforts are underway to identify the deceased.

The site of the explosion at an illegal coal mine. PTI

The police said a suo motu FIR has been registered at Khliehriat police station.

Meghalaya CM Conrad K Sangma, in a video, said the accident site was remote and situated about 25 km from the district headquarters.

▸ Meghalaya, Page 3B

New schools in fix over 'social, emotional safety' certificate rule

BENGALURU, DHNS: Starting a new new school? Be ready with three new certificates showing that the school premises ensure social-emotional-personal, sexual and cyber safety.

The department of School Education and Literacy, which has invited applications to register new schools in the 2026-27 academic year under permanent affiliation, has demanded these three new certificates from schools, besides building and fire safety clearances.

This move has irked schools who say they have no clarity on who issues these certificates.

"Even if it is self certification by the schools, how can they certify children's emotional safety?" questioned private school management representatives.

▸ School, Page 3B

2023 POLLS P 3C

SC upholds election of Malur MLA

The Supreme Court on Thursday set aside the Karnataka High Court's judgment, which annulled the election of Congress member K Y Nanjegowda as MLA from the Malur constituency in the 2023 assembly elections. It noted that even after the recounting, Nanjegowda secured 250 more votes than his opponent.

SHUNS LEFT P 6

Cong to fight Bengal polls alone

The Congress on Thursday shut its door on the CPM for an electoral understanding in West Bengal by deciding to contest all 294 constituencies in the Assembly election. The decision came three weeks after the CPM Central Committee said it was open to have an electoral understanding with the Congress.

FRESH TROUBLE P 6

Manipur tense over Kukis joining govt

A day after a "popular government" was reinstated in strife-torn Manipur, violence erupted in Kuki-dominated Churachandpur district during a "shutdown" and a "social boycott" called by Kuki organisations over the decision by five Kuki MLAs to join the government.

Shri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

Shri D.K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

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MSIL

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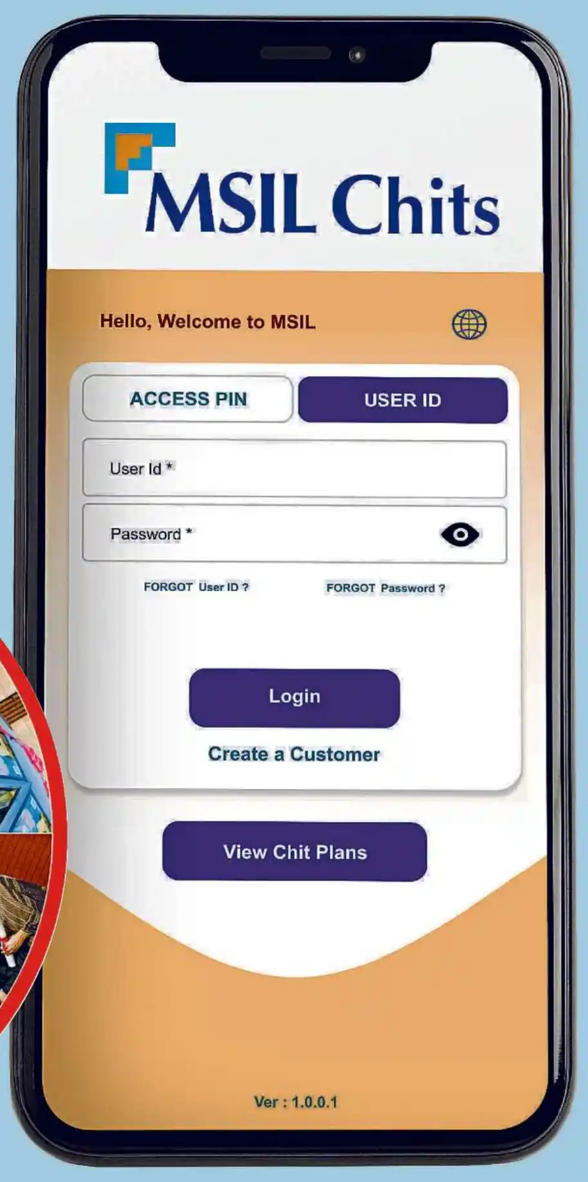

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BSWML to spend Rs 6.3 cr on exposure visits for staff

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bengaluru Solid Waste Management Limited (BSWML) will spend Rs 6.3 crore on exposure visits for civic workers and senior officials as part of its capacity-building programme.

While it may not consist of overseas visits, the programme will cover Indore, Visakhapatnam and Mysuru.

On Thursday, BSWML floated tenders seeking two separate services: one for civic workers with an estimated cost of Rs 4.89 crore and another valued at Rs 1.40 crore for similar visits meant for executives and technical officials.

Officials said the initiative was aimed at enhancing skills and operational knowledge through structured exposure programmes.

"The visits will help sanitation workers and officials to observe waste management practices in other cities, including advanced segregation, processing and disposal systems," a senior officer said.

Central corp invites NGOs, RWAs for pre-budget meet

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bengaluru Central City Corporation has invited NGOs, senior citizens' forums, and Residents' Welfare Associations to take part in a pre-budget consultation meeting for the 2026–27 financial year.

Commissioner Rajendra Cholan said the meeting will be held on Saturday at the conference hall on the 10th floor of the Public Utility Building, with the objective of gathering suggestions from citizens and civil society groups to help shape a people-friendly budget.

The civic body said preparations for the 2026–27 budget are already underway and that the consultation aims to incorporate public feedback to strengthen urban development and citizen-centric initiatives.

Suburban rail: How will Cantt-Whitefield be connected?

Kengeri-Whitefield trains likely with signalling change at Cantt

MUTHI-UR-RAHMAN SIDDIQUI
BENGALURU, DHNS

The alignment of the Bengaluru Suburban Railway Project's Corridor 3 has been approved, but there is no clarity on how the Cantonment-Whitefield section will be connected.

Also called the Parijatha Line, the 35.52-km Corridor 3 was originally planned to connect Kengeri and Whitefield via KSR Bengaluru and Cantonment.

However, the Detailed Project Report (DPR) examined only the 18.47-km Kengeri-Cantonment stretch and proposed separate tracks. Of this, 10.4 km will be elevated and 8.07 km at-grade, with four elevated and five at-grade stations.

The remaining 17.05-km Cantonment-Whitefield section was excluded due to Indian Railways' ongoing quadrupling (four-laning) works. The DPR warned that limited land availability would make it difficult to build dedicated suburban tracks and suggested sharing two Indian Railway lines instead to run suburban services to Whitefield.

At Cantonment, suburban lines merge into the quadrupling section at km: 349/700.

While the South Western Railway (SWR) has approved the alignment, it has left out the Cantonment-Whitefield section.

Railway Infrastructure Development Company Karnataka (K-RIDE), the implementing agency, has favoured sharing Indian Railway tracks beyond Cantonment and changing the signalling system to address interoperability issues.

While Indian Railways uses automatic block signalling, BSRP trains will operate on the Communication Based Train Control (CBTC) system.

"We plan to run end-to-end train services between Kengeri and Whitefield. At Cantonment, we will switch off CBTC and operate on automatic signalling, so passengers won't have to deboard," a senior K-RIDE official explained.

Railway officials, however, support terminating suburban services at Cantonment and operating MEMU trains for onward travel to Whitefield, which would require passengers to deboard.

"The alignment has been approved as per the DPR. Beyond Cantonment, not much land is available after quadrupling," Ashutosh Kumar Singh, Divisional Railway Manager, Bengaluru, told *DH*, adding that the quadrupling project would be completed by December 2026.

Citing signalling differences, another senior railway official said operating MEMU services between Cantonment and Whitefield was the most feasible option.

At Cantonment, the SWR has built a suburban terminal with five dead-end platforms and as many stabling lines. The BSRP's elevated station will be located slightly away from this terminal along a curved alignment and connected by a foot overbridge.

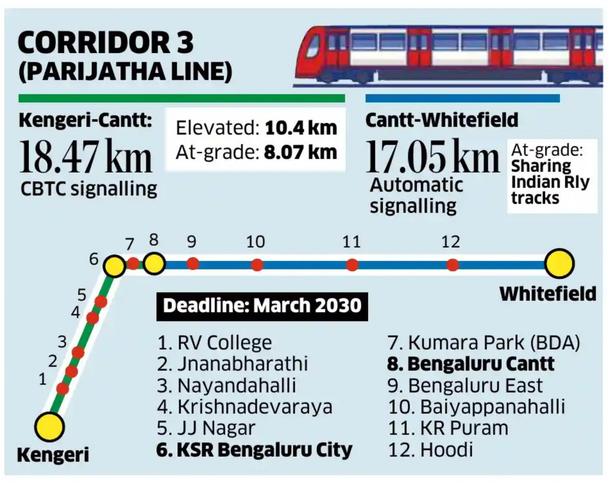
K-RIDE Managing Director Lakshman Singh said a final decision on the Cantonment-Whitefield connectivity would be taken after technical evaluation.

"We will decide once detailed design drawings are prepared," he said. "Land assessment for the Kengeri-Cantonment section is under way and tenders will be called soon. Corridor 3's deadline is March 2030."

Minister of State for Railways V Somanna said alignments of all four BSPR corridors had been approved, but flagged slow progress. "Despite our efforts, the project has not moved much in the last three years. The state should cooperate," he told *DH*.

Corridor 3 is often seen by planners as the "least important" as it overlaps the metro's Purple Line at several locations.

The DPR also flagged physical constraints along its alignment, including rail overbridges at Deepanjali Nagar and Goripalya, the metro alignment beyond Nayandahalli, and temples at three locations along the tracks, which limit space for erecting viaduct columns.



Hoax bomb threats target two foreign consulates in city

Italy, Japan missions receive identical emails; no explosives found

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Consulate General of Italy and the Consulate General of Japan in Bengaluru received a bomb threat email, police officials said on Thursday.

After a thorough check, both threat emails sent from the same ID were declared hoaxes.

The Halasuru police registered an FIR on January 30 following a complaint by Giandomenico Milano, 45, the Consul General, Italy. The complaint was physically submitted to the police by Security Officer Cosimo Ciciriello.

It is alleged that on January 29, at 5.25 am, the official email IDs of the consulate — bangalore.visa@esteri.it, bangalore.consolare@esteri.it and bangalore.consgen@esteri.it — received an email from gaina_ramesh@outlook.com. "5 RDX to blast in Italy Consulate, bengaluru at 1 PM. Evacuate Diplomats by 10 AM!" the email said.

An inspection was conducted as per the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP), and the threat was declared a hoax. The case was registered under Section 66F (cyber terrorism) of the Information Technology (IT) Act. Further investigation is ongoing.

A case was registered by the Vidhana Soudha police on January 29 following a complaint by Hoshino Shingo, 32, a security officer at the Consulate General of Japan.

"On 29.01.2026, the Consulate General of Japan in Bengaluru, Prestige Nebula Building, Cubbon Road, Bengaluru, received a bomb threat email from an unknown email ID: gaina_ramesh@outlook.com at 5:32 am to cgjapan-blr@ig.mofa.go.jp and cgjblr@ig.mofa.go.jp. Hence, requested to take appropriate action in this matter, etc.

"After the receipt of the said complaint, GSC 18, NCR No. 16/2026 was registered. Since this case is of non-cognisance, permission was obtained from the 41 ACJM Court, and a case was registered," the FIR noted.

5% fare hike 'small', operating costs went up by 10.2%: BMRCL

Pay Rs 1-5 more across all fare zones from Monday

BENGALURU, DHNS

It's official. Namma Metro on Thursday announced the fare hike from Monday, insisting that it had implemented a rather "small" increase of 5% compared to the 10.2% rise in its annual operating cost.

The revision will take effect exactly a year after the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) hiked the fares by an average of 51.55% before discounts, per the recommendations of the Fare Fixation Committee (FFC).

Last year's hike was the first since 2017.

The BMRCL noted that to avoid such infrequent and steep fare increases, the committee recommended an annual hike through a transparent formula linked to its operations and maintenance cost or 5%, whichever is lower, by rounding off to the nearest rupee.

Accordingly, fares have been increased by Rs 1-5 across 10 fare zones, it added.

Citing its audited financial data for 2024-25, the BMRCL stated that while its O&M cost had risen by 10.20% as per the formula-based index, the hike was limited to 5%.

The 5% discount during peak hours and the 10% discount during non-peak hours and on Sundays and three designated national holidays (January 26, August 15 and October 1) will continue, the BMRCL said.

REVISED FARE STRUCTURE

Fare zone	Distance slab (km)	Existing fare	Revised fare
F1	0-2	10	11
F2	2-4	20	21
F3	4-6	30	32
F4	6-8	40	42
F5	8-10	50	53
F6	10-15	60	63
F7	15-20	70	74
F8	20-25	80	84
F9	25-30	90	95
F10	>30	90	95

PASSES

- **1 day**: Rs 313 (smartcards); Rs 263 (QR code)
- **3 days**: Rs 628 (smartcards); Rs 578 (QR code)
- **5 days**: Rs 943 (smartcards); Rs 893 (QR code)

Put annual hike on hold, form new FFC: Surya

The Opposition BJP has criticised the metro fare hike.

In a letter to Union Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs Manohar Lal Khattar, Bangalore South MP LS Tejasvi Surya flagged "arithmetic errors" in the revised fare calculation, notably the selection of the "wrong" base year of 2016-17 to compute operational costs.

He added that despite being flagged to the BMRCL multiple times, commuters continue to be overcharged.

He urged the Centre to constitute a new FFC and put on hold the annual hike until the fares are rationalised.

500 lifts, 1K escalators, travelators at select metro stations by 2027

BENGALURU, DHNS: As Bengaluru's Metro stations are increasingly becoming overcrowded, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) is planning to provide mobility infrastructure to ease passenger movement.

Speaking at the second 'Smart Lift and Mobility World 2026' event on Thursday, BMRCL Director (Rolling Stock and Electricals) Sumit Bhatnagar announced that the upcoming 78-km expansion will see the deployment of 500 lifts and 1,000 escalators.

The expansion is set to nearly double the current network from 96 km to 175 km within the next two years, increasing the station count from 83 to 127.

"As the network grows, the need for lifts and travelators will rise, particularly at major interchange hubs where seamless passenger movement is as critical as train operations," he noted.

A significant shift in the BMRCL's procurement strategy is the emphasis on localisation. In line with federal norms, new infrastructure projects now require at least 60 per cent local content. Bhatnagar said moving away from imports to local manufacturing is essential for cost competitiveness, given the massive volumes involved in the Phase 2 and Phase 3 procurements.

BMRCL Director Sumit Bhatnagar at the 'Smart Lift and Mobility World 2026' on Thursday.

Anitha Raghunath, Director of Virgo Communications, said with daily ridership touching one million, these mobility systems are no longer luxury additions, but integral to the commuter experience. To ensure long-term reliability, the BMRCL has bundled these procurements with maintenance contracts spanning up to a decade.

The summit also featured HR Shivkumar, Secretary of Karnataka RERA, who discussed building a future-ready real estate ecosystem.

Consider applications for change in metro route near Nagarabhavi: HC to BMRCL

BENGALURU, DHNS: The High Court of Karnataka has disposed of a PIL plea challenging the re-alignment of Namma Metro's Phase 3 near Nagarabhavi.

A division bench of Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice CM Poonacha noted that it was for the authorities concerned to determine the route of a metro line.

"We do not consider it apposite to entertain a public interest litigation for examining the route of a metro line. It is for the authorities concerned to determine the same. The determination of the route of a metro line would require consideration of various factors, including the number of commuters it would serve," the bench said.

The petition was filed by the Nagarabhavi Property Owners and Business Establishments' Welfare Association.

They contended that the original plan on the Outer Ring Road ran from Dwaraka Nagar to Chowdeshwari Nagar.

They pointed out that the re-aligned route — from Nagarabhavi Circle to Sumanhalli Cross via Vinayaka Layout, Paredypalya and BDA Complex, Nagarabhavi — would seriously impact the green cover. They further argued that the realignment would require the felling of over 600 trees and the demolition of more than 600 houses.

The petitioners also placed on record a rapid environmental impact assessment and photographs showing the trees to be destroyed.

Maintaining that the metro line in the outer region would avoid such environmental damage, they urged the court to cancel the re-aligned route plan from Nagarabhavi Circle to Sumanhalli Cross via Vinayaka Layout, Paparedypalya and BDA Complex, Nagarabhavi.

The bench, however, noted that various factors need to be considered while determining a metro route.

"However, considering that the petitioner has annexed a report regarding the impact on the environment, we consider it apposite to direct the respondents, including Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL), to consider the same," the bench said.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL

Seshadripuram Education Trust: Blood donation to celebrate 114th anniversary of KM Nanjappa; Trust premises, Seshadripuram; 9.30 am.

Agriculture Department: International trade fair; Tripuravasini, Palace Grounds; 11 am.

CULTURAL

Karnataka Nataka Academy and National School of Drama: Bharata Ranga Mahotsava and Ranga Parishe, celebrating Indian theatre, staging of plays 'Ambedkar Collage' and 'Mad Woman of Chaillot', poetry festival to honour Rashtrakavi GS Shivarudrappa and other events; Kalagrama, Mallattahalli; 4 pm.

Bharatiya Samagana Sabha: 'Purana Gitam', music by Archana, Samanvi, Keshav Mohankumar, Adamya Ramanand, Sandip Narayan, B Anantakrishnan, SJ Arjun Ganesh, S Krishna and others; Chowdaiah Memorial Hall; Vyalikaval; 5 pm.

Department of Information and Public Relations: Bangalore International Film Festival, concluding ceremony; Lulu Mall, Rajajingar; 6 pm.

RELIGIOUS

Sriramamandira: Disourse on Jaimini Bharata by Pavagada Prakasha Rao; Sriramamandira, NR Colony; 5.45 pm.

Invites to be published in this column should be sent to: **incitytoday@deccanherald.co.in.** Please note that hard copies will not be accepted

◆ CITY WEATHER ◆

FORECAST

Mainly clear sky

TEMPERATURES

Maximum	30.0°C
Minimum	16.0°C
Rainfall	--
Humidity	95%
Sunset (Feb 6)	6:22 pm
Sunrise (Feb 7)	6:45 am
Moonrise	9:29 pm
Moonset	9:03 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

Raman Young Science Innovator Award finals on Sunday

BENGALURU, DHNS: The seventh edition of the Raman Young Science Innovator (RYSI) Award will be held on Sunday, with over 100 finalists set to participate.

The event is being conducted in association with the Raman Research Institute Trust and will be hosted at 'Panchavati', CV Raman's home in Malleswaram.

Established with the aim of creating interest in science among the youth, this year, RYSI received over 3,000 entries from children submitting hands-on science innovations online.

A panel of scientists, teachers and volunteers picked about 100 most innovative entries from the list. The shortlisted entrants will exhibit their work at Panchavati, to be judged by a 12-member panel comprising scientists and teachers.

The awards will be offered in three categories: Junior (3rd and 4th grade), Intermediate (5th to 7th grade), and Senior (8th to 10th grade).

During the finals, one science topic or activity will be chosen for each category. The best one will be declared the winner in each category.

DH
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Bengaluru North procures 33 hand-held sweeper machines

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Bengaluru North City Corporation on Thursday began a trial run of 33 hand-held sweeper machines, aimed at replacing traditional brooms used for road sweeping. The machines will be operated by pourakarmikas, officials said.

Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar launched the pilot at 1st Main Road in Sahakarnagar, saying the machines would help keep roads cleaner while making the work of pourakarmikas easier.

The corporation also procured 14 blower machines, 35 trolley dust bins for storing road waste, and 23 traffic cones for safety. The equipment was purchased at Rs 10 lakh.

Corporation Commissioner Pommala Sunil Kumar launched the pilot at 1st Main Road in Sahakarnagar.

Carnatic instrumental

BENGALURU, DHNS: Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira will present instrumental sounds of Carnatic music with Kumaresh Rajagopalan (violin), Kishore Ramesh (mridanga), and Giridhar Udupa (ghata) at 5.30 pm on Friday at the Bangalore Gayana Samaja, KR Road.

This is part of the Annual Spring Music Festival.

ADS, AI & AIYO

'AI.YO!' sets the tone for this year's Big Bang Awards

BENGALURU, DHNS

The city's advertising and creative fraternity is set to converge on Saturday for the 41st edition of the Big Bang Awards.

Organised by the Advertising Club Bangalore, the event this year pivots to a theme that is uniquely Bengaluru: 'AI.YO!'.

The theme is a linguistic nod to the collision of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the quintessentially South Indian exclamation of surprise, 'Aiyo'.

According to the organisers, the concept aims to bridge the gap between global technology and local culture, reflecting how the industry navigates the AI revolution with both curiosity and humour.

Departing from its traditional evening format, the 2026 edition at The Ritz-Carlton will be a day-long affair, starting from 12 pm. The schedule includes a curated AI Experience Zone, workshops, and a live photography contest.

"The Big Bang Awards are about celebrating ideas that shape culture and define the future," said Laeeq Ali, President, Ad Club Bangalore.

A highlight is the 'Founders Circle' fireside chat at 4 pm. A high-profile panel featuring industry veterans like Bijou Kurien and Ashish Thukral will discuss 'Business Growth in the Age of AI', focusing on how Indian companies can convert tech shifts into measurable growth.

Mic to medals

The festivities include the 'Bang On' music festival, where industry professionals trade briefs for microphones. The day culminates in a gala awards night, recognising excellence across 130 categories.

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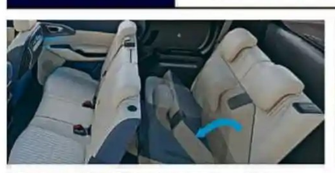
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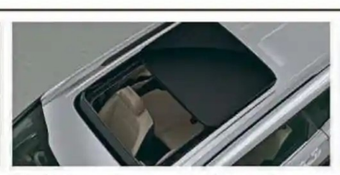
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State Level Krishi Pandit / Krishi Prashasti Award Presentation Programme

February 06th - 08th
Tripuravasini, Palace Ground, Bengaluru

Inauguration: 6th February 2026 | Time: 11:00 AM

The program is being inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister in the presence of Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister and Hon'ble Agriculture Minister Shri N. Chaluvarayaswamy.

Inauguration
Shri Siddaramaiah
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Govt. of Karnataka

Guest of Honour

Shri D. K. Shivakumar
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister, Govt. of Karnataka

Sushri. Shobha Karandlaje
Hon'ble Minister of State for Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises, Labour & Employment, Govt. of India

Presided By

Shri N. Chaluvarayaswamy
Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture, Govt. of Karnataka and Chairman, International Trade Fair - 2026

August Presence

Shri Ramalinga Reddy
Minister of Transport & Muzrai, Govt. of Karnataka

Shri Krishna Byregowda
Hon'ble Minister of Revenue, Govt. of Karnataka

Shri Shivanand Patil
Hon'ble Minister of Textile, Sugarcane Development & Sugar and Agricultural Marketing, Govt. of Karnataka

Shri S. S. Mallikarjun
Hon'ble Minister of Mines & Geology and Horticulture, Govt. of Karnataka

Shri K. Venkatesh
Hon'ble Minister of Animal Husbandry and Sericulture, Govt. of Karnataka

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Hon'ble Member of Karnataka Legislative Assembly, Malleshwaram Constituency

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Crop Survey
Crop details can be uploaded with the help of local private residents/ Department Officials.

Crop survey information can be viewed and any discrepancies may be resolved by raising objections through **"Bele Darshak App".**

For more information, Contact **" Farmers helpline - 18004253553".**

Karnataka State Department of Agriculture, Seshadri Road, Bangalore - 560001.

Women-only auto service set for launch next week

It will operate from 6 am to midnight in the initial weeks

SHRADDHA A K
TEAM METROLIFE

An auto service designed exclusively for women drivers and passengers will start operations in Bengaluru on February 14. The platform, called Sakhi, follows a ride-hailing model.

The service completed around 17 trips in a week during a pilot run in January. After the launch, it will initially operate from 6 am to midnight and may be extended to 24 hours if demand increases, says founder Krishnavi Parekh. The platform does not follow surge pricing. The minimum fare for the first two kilometres is Rs 50, followed by Rs 20 for each additional kilometre.

Krishnavi says the initiative aims to address the anxiety many women experience while using conventional transport, especially at night. The idea grew out of her own commuting experiences in Mumbai, while she was studying and later working there. "I was never comfortable sitting behind a man on a two-wheeler. I also felt unsafe when cab drivers asked me to come to locations other than the assigned pick-up point when I had to take a cab late at night," says the 24-year-old entrepreneur, who moved to Bengaluru last August.

Conversations with other women revealed similar concerns and reinforced her belief that there was a need for a women-only transport service. The initiative has struck an emotional chord on social media, with users sharing heartwarming stories and photographs after travelling with women auto drivers.

Women who took the Sakhi auto service during its pilot run in January have posted about their experiences on social media. PIC: SAKHI

Sakhi's mobile app is currently under development. For now, the service operates through a web app and WhatsApp. It has 50 women drivers aged between 21 and 40, all with prior driving experience. At present, all earnings go directly to the drivers, though the platform may adopt a commission model in the future.

The drivers have undergone training in customer service and communication. She says many passengers have shared that being greeted by a woman auto driver feels especially welcoming.

The platform aims to build an inclusive ecosystem and plans to onboard trans women drivers in the future. "Sakhi is as much about driver empowerment as passenger safety," she says. She recalls stories of women who took up driving after losing their spouse or who accept rides just to meet urgent financial needs. "That independence, that ability to rely on yourself, is inspiring," says Krishnavi.

To book a ride, visit ride.sakhiwomen.in or WhatsApp 63619 33364.

POPCORN

Goli maar

A policeman in Ernakulam was out on duty when it started raining. The bullets in his revolver got wet, and he was running out of time to attend a ceremony. He promptly removed the bullets and placed them on a kitchen frying pan. That was a quick fix to dry his ammunition. Turns out the bullets went off. No one was hurt by the explosion, but see, this is the problem when you give fancy names to everyday eats. Bullet idli, it seems! And gunpowder dosa.

Old factories, warehouses find new life as cultural hubs

People behind these projects say adaptive reuse is the need of the hour in cities

BARKHA KUMARI
TEAM METROLIFE

Defunct factories and empty warehouses in Bengaluru are being reimagined as hubs for public engagement. After restaurants started moving into these industrial relics almost a decade ago, performance venues, museums, and malls are now following suit.

The people behind these projects admit that repurposing old structures is far harder than building from scratch, as often there are no records of wiring, plumbing, sewer lines or the strength of columns and beams. But they acknowledge the benefits: many of these factories sit on large parcels of land, often within green campuses, which is rare to find in Bengaluru today. They cite the example of cities like Berlin, London and Mumbai which boast a large number of old mills, godowns or power stations that now serve a completely different purpose. The Kochi Biennale is another successful example of adaptive reuse for contemporary needs, they add.

The Alembic Glass Factory was started post-Independence in Whitefield and shut operations about two decades ago. (Right) The repurposed venue is currently hosting a multidisciplinary festival of art, design, music and technology.

Old-world charm

On Tuesday, a multidisciplinary festival themed on nature's intelligence opened in Whitefield at a venue that was once the Alembic Glass Factory. "It started post-Independence as part of the industrial boom and shut about two decades ago," shares Roshan Netalkar, founder and festival director of 'The Sixth Sense'. The 18-day festival has incorporated the site's legacy by using wires, cables, barrels, and switchboards in installations and decor. "Two art installations will be set inside the silo, a unit where glass used to be melted," Netalkar adds.

Netalkar was "chasing the factory vibe" for the event, when, three years ago, he stumbled upon this 2,00,000-plus sq ft space. He was blown away by its openness and old-world charm, thanks to high ceilings, granite walls, and cement floors. What also helped is that the site, once on the outskirts, now boasts good connectivity because of two metro stations nearby.

Apart from fixing water leaks and repairing dents in the flooring, the structure has been largely retained as is. He says the owner had already secured structural certification to ready it for another run.

Not always cheaper

A walk around Essensai067, a mall and cultural space that opened in Whitefield last April, reveals curious names — Luwa Street, Xorella Street, and Open End Street. These walkways are named after the machines and processes that once powered a spinning mill run by Sai Lakshmi Industries.

Somshekhar Mirpuri, cofounder and a member of the family that owns the facility, says they have retained much of the original 5.16-acre campus, from its columns and beams to over a hundred trees, including one planted to mark his birth. Contractors, he adds, were impressed by the strength of the walls and said these could support two additional floors. "The makeover involved refitting the existing structure, navigating old trenches common in earlier construction, and adapting modern building methods. We also reused excavated soil to create mud blocks, which went into the facade and structural binding," he says. Mirpuri clarifies that repurposing an old structure does not necessarily come cheaper than building anew. "It depends on what you want to do and how grand you want to make it," he says.

Court rules

The government has also jumped on the bandwagon. The 105-acre campus in Baiyappanahalli, which once housed the New Government Electrical Factory (NGEF), is being transformed into a sprawling tree park and amenity hub. And its 12,000 sq m switchgear factory shed will make way for India's first startup and technology museum. The project, still in its early stages, is being developed as a public-private partnership between the department of electronics, and UnboxingBLR.

The High Court has mandated that the existing structures and green cover cannot be removed, a directive that Malini Goyal, CEO of UnboxingBLR, is thrilled about. "Where else in Bengaluru can someone visit a museum after walking past a tree park with really old trees? Retaining the site's natural heritage while building on it is a beautiful challenge for us," she says. In the renewal of the NGEF campus, Malini sees the "renewal of the city itself and the experiences its public spaces can offer".

Praise for sustainability

Bangalore Creative Circus in Yeshwanthpur has drawn wide praise for its sustainable practices since it opened its doors in 2021. The community space was once a tile warehouse and, earlier, a steel factory dating back to 1980. When the founders first saw it, it resembled an aircraft hangar, with a few sheds on the side.

"We are extremely proud to have created a forest-like patch on the base that was once entirely covered in concrete," shares cofounder Manisha Vinod. Alongside the core structure, the team retained the larger of the two gates, which was earlier used for loading and unloading goods. Today, it is used by trucks carrying large commissioned artworks, and to let huge crowds in during major festivals.

The venue draws about 2,000 visitors a month. Yet attracting people remains a challenge, as these factories were built on the far edges of the city. "That's why, in our communication, we always highlight that there is a metro stop and a mall nearby," she says.

EVENTS

Film screening
'Menace', a documentary that examines how Indian cities can co-exist with stray dogs, will be screened on February 8, 5 pm, at Bangalore International Centre, Domlur. RSVP at bangaloreinternationalcentre.org

Show for children
A ventriloquism show and workshop by M Santhosh Kumar will be held on February 8, 4 pm, at Atta Galatta, Indiranagar. It is open to children aged five to 15. Details on @attagalatta on Instagram.

Arts and crafts
A non-profit is hosting 'Festival of Handmade', a flea market of handmade arts and crafts with workshops and cultural performances, from February 11 to 15, 11 am to 8 pm, at NIFT, HSR Layout. Details on @ahundredhands on Instagram.

Kannada play
Antharanga will present T P Kailasam's classic Kannada play, 'Huttadalli Hutta', directed by Archana Shyam, on February 8, 7.15 pm, at Kalagrama, Samskrutika Samuchaya. Tickets online.

Activists call for stricter laws against public filming

Last week, two girls caught a man filming them at a traffic signal in Bengaluru

RASHMI RAJAGOPAL
TEAM METROLIFE

PIC FOR REPRESENTATION

A series of incidents over the past few weeks has highlighted the importance of stricter laws to curb filming people in public without their consent, say activists. Last week, two women in an autorickshaw noticed a man pointing his phone camera at them while they were stuck at a traffic signal. The man was riding pillion and was likely working with the rider. They in turn recorded the men and posted the evidence on social media.

Advocate Indra Dhanush notes that it amounts to voyeurism (section 77), stalking (section 78), and insulting modesty (section 79) under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita. It can also attract Section 66 (E) of the IT Act, he adds.

Recently, Dhanush was approached by two young women who were being followed and recorded by a group of men over a period of two weeks. "We approached the cops and the men were arrested. They spent two nights in jail," he recalls. He adds that a year ago, a woman consulted him after she was filmed by a news channel without her knowledge, when she was in an inebriated condition on New Year's Eve.

Last year, a number of Instagram accounts were suspended for posting voyeuristic videos of women in public spaces.

Incidents like this bring into focus how women do not have a place in public spaces, says Priya Varadarajan of Durga India, a women's rights NGO. "When women occupy a public space, they are considered public property," she says. She notes that bystander action is of utmost importance in situations such as this. The NGO conducts workshops on bystander action to enable regular people to stop or de-escalate situations that threaten one's safety or privacy in public spaces.

When dealing with victims of public space violence and online harassment, the organisation prioritises their mental health, and then helps them file a complaint with the cybercrime department. They also conduct group therapy sessions for victims, Priya shares.

While there are laws governing such violations, more stringent and well-defined laws are the need of the hour, says a women's rights activist. She cites a recent example of a friend who was stalked online after someone saw her in a restaurant and overheard her name from a conversation she was having with her dining companions. "He then looked her up online and started leaving offensive comments on her Instagram posts," she recalls.

However, Tanveer Hasan, who works with Centre for Internet and Society, believes that the focus should be on social behaviour, rather than on the law. "Sure we can bring in more laws, but it would be more pragmatic to influence social behaviour by organising more campaigns, awareness drives, orientation programmes and publishing more research about the adverse effects of irresponsible use of technology," he explains.

CITY MIX

Photo show on human relationship with images

A photography exhibition exploring the complex relationship between humans and images will open on February 7. Titled 'Being Hyper Human', the show examines our relationship with images of ourselves, the meanings we derive from them, and why we feel unsettled when reality doesn't match the image.

The show is the outcome of a collaboration between students, alumni, and faculty of Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Bengaluru, and the Fashion Institute of Technology, New York. The significance of trans-continental artistic partnerships will be discussed on the opening day.

On view until February 20, from 10 am to 5 pm, at Venkatappa Art Gallery, Kasturba Road.

Play detective in a murder mystery show

Varun Gwalani will host an interactive show where the audience will need to solve a murder mystery. Participants are required to step into the role of detectives, and uncover clues, examine evidence and identify the murderer among them. Titled 'Who Started the Fire?', the show blends storytelling, improv, and immersive theatre. Gwalani is an author of suspense novels.

On February 7, 4.30 pm, at Underline Centre, Indiranagar. Tickets online.

Inclusive stories for kids

All India Professionals' Congress – LGBTQIA+ vertical, Karnataka, in collaboration with Champaca Bookstore will host a children's storytelling session. It will be led by transgender storytellers, and draws inspiration from Jawaharlal Nehru's love for children and his vision for an inclusive India. It will feature readings from 'Uncle Nehru, Please Send an Elephant' by Devika Cariapa and Satwik Gade, and 'Guthli Has Wings' by Kanak Shashi. The event is open to children in the 6-12 age group, and is aimed to sensitise children to transgender individuals.

On February 7, 11 am onwards, at Champaca Bookstore, Indiranagar. Register at champaca.in

No-cost rangapravesha at Bidadi arts venue

An arts village in Bidadi, about 1.5 hours from central Bengaluru, has announced plans to offer its space free of cost for rangapravesha, the debut full-length solo recital by a classical dancer. The option is available only on weekdays.

NeeRav Arts Village will provide its 40x25 ft stage, a lawn seating area with floor mats, a music system, and a cottage for the artiste's use on the day of the performance. A dining space for about 20 people is also available free of cost, but the cost of hosting the ceremonial meal will have to be borne by the artiste.

In the two weeks since the announcement, the venue has received roughly 15 calls and 30 messages enquiring about rangapravesha opportunities, mostly from Bengaluru, with some from Mysuru and Kolar.

Founder Ravi Gandikote says the idea came in response to Bharatanatyam dancer Sandhya Udupa's recent podcast, in which she expressed concern about the growing commercialisation of rangapravesha and its implications on students who cannot afford lavish ceremonies. According to Preeti Banerjee, an Odissi dancer who also runs a performance venue, grand rangapraveshas in Bengaluru can cost Rs 4-5 lakh. "It can also be done in a simple manner. The choice really rests with the parents, the artiste, and the guru," she says.

Write to info@neeravartsvillage.com.

The stage for rangapravesha at NeeRav Arts Village, Bidadi.

New book on paper currency of the princely state of Hyderabad

TEAM METROLIFE

Bengaluru-based numismatist Rezwan Razack's latest book, 'Paper Money of the Princely State of Hyderabad', was launched last Saturday. It traces the story of Hyderabad's currency from the time of the first Nizam in 1724 to its withdrawal in 1959.

The book is a result of three years of in-depth research and builds on his 25-year study of Indian paper money. With little material available online, he relied on frequent visits to Hyderabad, where he explored archives and interacted with dealers, private collectors, and professionals at auction houses.

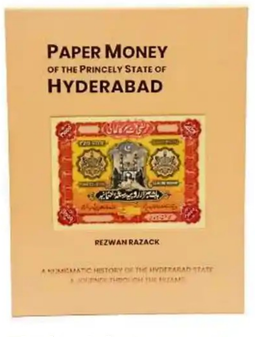
The book features over 600 photographs of notes, design patterns, and archival material. It goes beyond simple cataloguing and documents details of design, printing, packaging, circulation, and forgery of notes.

It also recounts the 1920 sinking of the SS Egypt, which was carrying Hyderabad notes printed in England, many of which were later salvaged.

A businessman, Razack notes that Hyderabad was the only princely state allowed by the British to issue paper currency, following a shortage of metal during the First World War.

Comprising 33 chapters, the book also explains "the Osmania Sicca system, in which seven Hyderabad rupees equalled six British Indian rupees".

Available at Rezwan Razack's Museum of Indian Paper Money, Brunton Road.



The book features more than 600 photographs.

Nexus charge levelled against Victoria Hospital doctors

Accused of writing specific pharmacist's names at the back of prescription

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

Doctors at Victoria Hospital are asking patients to buy medicines from a few select private pharmacies, patients allege.

This has raised doubts about a possible nexus between the doctors and pharmacists.

More than five private pharmacies are located opposite the Victoria Hospital gate. Besides verbally telling patients, doctors reportedly write the pharmacist's name at the back of the prescription.

When *DH* spoke to patients buying medicines at the pharmacies, they said that doctors' referrals are common.

"The doctors provide us some of the medicines," said Lakshmi (name changed), who was visiting the hospital's OPD ward. "We are sent out to buy other medicines, which are not affordable for people like us. We are BPL card holders and have been coming to this hospital for several years."

Nida Fathima, daughter of a patient, said the doctors used to provide almost all the medicines. "But with time, it got fewer and fewer," she said, adding that doctors mention the pharmacies so that people will not go elsewhere.

A pharmacist said patients come looking for a specific pharmacy although the same medicines are available in all pharmacies. "We do not know the reason."

A hospital source confirmed that such referrals have become common in recent times.

Dr Deepak S, Medical Superintendent, Victoria Hospital, responded: "We only prescribe (for outside purchase) those medicines that are not available in the government supply. We also tell the doctors to mostly prescribe medicines with combinations similar to the ones we have."

The medical superintendent recently lodged an FIR against data operators for allegedly using their personal UPI IDs instead of the hospital's accounts for OPD, X-ray and other services, diverting an estimated Rs 23 lakh. Police are investigating further.

Dr Deepak said: "We noticed discrepancies sometime ago, but we did not immediately take action because we wanted to be absolutely sure. After observing for around six months, we were certain and then filed a complaint.

"All the workers are contracted. We asked the agency (supplying personnel) to send other people. Now, we are rotating the staff to avoid such situations," he added.

DR DEEPAK S
Medical Superintendent, Victoria Hospital

"We only prescribe (for outside purchase) those medicines that are not available in the government supply. We also tell the doctors to mostly prescribe medicines with combinations similar to the ones we have.

BMCRI-allied students intensify protest demanding stipends

Protesting interns say they work 8-12-hour shifts under heavy clinical loads without pay

BENGALURU, DHNS

Around 250 students of the BSc Allied Health Sciences at the Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI) intensified their protest on Thursday, moving their demonstration to the Victoria Hospital campus.

The students, who began an indefinite strike on Wednesday, are demanding the immediate implementation of stipends for their compulsory one-year internship and the provision of basic academic infrastructure.

The protesting interns, including lab technicians, optometrists and radiology assistants, said they work 8-to-12-hour shifts, often under heavy clinical loads, yet receive no financial compensation.

In contrast, their counterparts at government-run institutions such as Kidwai Memorial Institute of Oncology and Sri Jayadeva Institute of Cardiovascular Sciences and Research receive monthly stipends ranging from Rs 7,000 to Rs 15,000.

The students claimed that their repeated appeals to the college administration and the state government have been met with the same response — that the stipend is a "policy decision" awaiting government funds.

"We are forced to perform full-time clinical duties and night shifts without any pay," said a protesting student. "Many of us are denied government hostel facilities and are struggling to afford private accommodation in the city."

CORE DEMANDS

- Immediate implementation of a monthly stipend for the 3+ course internship (interns currently work 8 to 12 hour shifts unpaid).
- Provision of a dedicated academic building for Allied Health Sciences (AHS).
- Appointment of permanent, qualified faculty for AHS instead of relying solely on medical PG students.
- Provision of government hostel facilities for interns who are currently forced to stay in expensive private accommodations.

BSc Allied Health Sciences students of BMCRI during the protest at the Victoria Hospital campus on Thursday.
DH PHOTO/BK JANARDHAN

Lack of facilities

Beyond this, the students said there is a chronic lack of facilities.

The Department of Allied Health Sciences reportedly lacks a dedicated building and permanent faculty.

Classes are often conducted by medical postgraduate students who, the protesters said, are also not compensated for this additional teaching responsibility.

The All-India Students' Association, which has extended support to the strike, stated that the students would continue to boycott classes and internship duties until a concrete timeline for the stipend implementation is provided.

Strike fallout

As the strike enters its third day, healthcare services at Victoria Hospital, where interns provide essential support under supervision, could see a visible impact if the protest continues.

Woman, lover arrested for husband's murder

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Sulibele police on Thursday arrested a woman and her lover for allegedly murdering her husband and attempting to pass it off as an accidental death.

Police said the body of the deceased Ashok, husband of the accused woman Pushpa, was discovered on the roadside on January 24 near Siddanahalli village.

Although it was initially seen as an accidental death, the police launched an investigation after being alerted by the villagers. They then arrested Pushpa and Devaraj, both in their 30s, on the suspicion that the duo had murdered 40-year-old Ashok.

Police probe revealed that Pushpa together with Devaraj, with whom she had an extra-marital relationship, hatched a plot to kill Ashok to continue their affair.

Devaraj planned the murder with his associates Munindra and Siddappa.

Ashok was lured on the pretext of a painting job. The trio then took Ashok for drinks. They later attacked him with an iron rod and bricks, killing him instantly. They dumped the body on the roadside to pass it off as an accidental death and left Ashok's bike nearby.

Suspected thief files assault complaint; police register FIR

BENGALURU, DHNS

A suspected thief filed a police complaint after an unidentified man attacked him inside an apartment complex where he allegedly entered to steal scrap metal.

The Sampigehalli police registered an FIR on February 1 after a complaint by 24-year-old auto driver Azgar Khan, from RT Nagar.

The FIR stated that the previous day, around 9.30 pm, Khan and his friends Razak and Shyam went near a house on Chokkanahalli Main Road in his autorickshaw.

While the other two waited outside, Khan jumped over the compound wall, entered the premises and began collecting electrical items in an attempt to steal them to fund their vices. A man and a woman then came out of the house and questioned Khan. He assaulted them and called his two friends, who joined him in attacking the couple. Razak smashed a beer bottle on the man's head, causing injuries, while glass shards struck the woman's cheek and cut it open.

When the woman screamed, other people began gathering around. Looking at this, Razak and Shyam ran away, leaving behind Khan.

"One among those who gathered hit me on my head with a piece of wood, leading to an injury," Khan was quoted as saying in the FIR.

After receiving medical treatment, Khan lodged a complaint and the police registered the FIR.

Kallahalli crematorium to remain shut for 20 days

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Kallahalli electric crematorium will remain temporarily closed for 20 days to facilitate civil repair works, the Bengaluru Central City Corporation (BCCC) said in a press release.

The repair works will be carried out between February 5 and 25, according to the executive engineer.

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This is to inform you that proposed development, at Sy Nos. Sy. Nos.48/1, 48/3, 48/4, 48/5, 48/10, 48/11 of Harohalli Yillage 6/*/2, 20/1, 20/3, 21/1, 21/2, 21/3, 23, 24, 25, 26/1, 26/2, 27/1, 27/2, 27/3, 29/1, 37 /1, 37 /2, 38/3, 38/4, 38/8, 38/9, 41/3, 43, 45/1, 45/2, 45/3, 45/4, 46/1, 46/2, 126, 140/1, 140/2, 140/3, 140/4, 140/5, 140/6, 145/l of Navilahalli village, K Hosakote Hobli, Alur taluk, Hassan District has been accorded Environment Clearance Certificate from the Ministry of Environment Forest and Climate Change, Govt. of India vide EC Identification No. EC25B3812KA5890482N & File No. – SEIAA 142 CON 2025 dtd. 03/02/2026. Copies of the Clearance Certificates are available with Karnataka State Pollution Control Board and can also be seen on the website of the Environment, Forest and Climate Change at http://environmentclearance.nic.in and http//seiaa.karnataka.gov.in

Prestige MRG Eco Ventures
Prestige Falcon Towers, No.19, Brunton Road,
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Prestige Estates Projects Limited
Prestige Falcon Towers, No.19, Brunton Road,
Bangalore -560025

PUBLIC NOTICE - E-AUCTION
RELIABLE CASHEW COMPANY PRIVATE LIMITED IN LIQUIDATION (RCCPL)
under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016

E-AUCTION
Sale of Assets under Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code, 2016
Dates E-Auction: 26.02.2026 and 27.02.2026

Pursuant to the Order of the Hon'ble National Company Law Tribunal, Chennai vide its order dated 09.08.2024 in the matter of Reliable Cashew Company Private Limited (In Liquidation), the undersigned is inviting bids for sale of assets of RCCPL as a going concern sale and/or sale of the assets owned by RCCPL forming part of the liquidation estate under section 35(f) of IBC, 2016 read with Regulation 32(e) and Regulation 32A of IBBI (Liquidation Process) Regulations, 2016. The said Assets will be sold on **"AS IS WHERE IS ", "AS IS WHAT IS", "WHATEVER THERE IS BASIS" and "NO RECOURSE BASIS".**

The Sale will be done by the undersigned through the E-Auction platform at the web portal https://ibbi.baanknet.com/eauction-ibbi/home Brief particulars of the sale are as follows:

Set of Assets	Assets	Reserve Price (In INR)	EMD Amount (In INR)
Category A-Sale of Corporate Debtor as a Going Concern Date and Time of e-auction: 26.02.2026 at 11.00 AM to 12.00 Noon			
Asset Set 1	Sale of Corporate Debtor as going Concern including non-core assets (under Regulation 32(e) read with Regulation 32A) of Liquidation Process Regulations Specific exclusion: i. Cash and cash equivalents, other bank balances ii. Proceeds from ongoing litigations	**8.250 Crores**	**0.825 Crores**
Category B -Sale of Corporate Debtor as a Going Concern (In case no bids are received for auction under Category A) Date and Time of e-auction: 26.02.2026 at 01.00 PM to 02.00 PM			
Asset Set 2	Sale of Corporate Debtor as going concern excluding non-core assets (under Regulation 32(e) read with Regulation 32A) of Liquidation Process Regulations Specific exclusion: i. Cash and cash equivalents, other bank balances ii. Non-Core assets of the Corporate Debtor as mentioned in Category 'C'. iii. Proceeds from ongoing litigations	**4.470 Crores**	**0.447 Crores**
Category C -Sale of Non-core assets (only land parcels) (In case no bids are received for auction under Category A) Date and Time of e-auction:26.02.2026 at 05.00 PM to 06.00 PM			
Asset Set 3	All the piece and parcel of a commercial plot at Sy No. 37-1, measuring 65.50 cents situated in Marakada Village, Mangaluru Taluk within Mangaluru City Corporation in the Registration Sub-district of Mangaluru, Karnataka	**87 Lakhs**	**8.70 Lakhs**
Asset Set 4	All the piece and parcel of commercial Site No.24, admeasuring 5 cents situated in Bangra kuloor, Mangaluru	**31.00 Lakhs**	**3.10 Lakhs**
Asset Set 5	All the piece and parcel of commercial Site No.25, admeasuring 5.30 cents situated in Bangra kuloor, Mangaluru	**33.00 Lakhs**	**3.30 Lakhs**
Asset Set 6	All the piece and parcel of a commercial plot at R.S.No.110/3, measuring 3.17 Acres situated in Bramhawar, Udupi	**2.50 Crores**	**0.250 Crores**
Category D Sale of Movable Assets at leased premises (only if no bids are received from Asset Category A or B) Date and Time of e-auction: 27.02.2026 at 11.00 AM to 12.00 Noon			
Asset Set 7	Plant and Machinery together with a Vehicle located at D. No, 12/92 and 12/93, Padavu Post, Shakti Nagar, Kulshekar, Mangaluru, Karnataka	**40.00 Lakhs**	**4.00 Lakhs**
Category E Sale of assets individual units (Movable and immovable properties) (In case no bids are received for auction under Category A or B) Date and Time of e-auction: 27.02.2026 at 01.00 PM to 02.00 PM			
Asset Set 8	**Industrial Property** (Movable and immovable assets) All the piece and parcels of the land measuring 100 cents, situated at, S.No.291/9P1, Kolalgiri, Uppoor Village, Udupi Taluk, Karnataka together with building, plant and machinery, furniture & fixtures, and vehicles.	**1.90 Crores**	**0.190 Crores**
Category F-Sale of movable Assets (In case no bids are received for auction under Asset Set 8) Date and Time of e-auction: 27.02.2026 at 03.00 PM to 04.00 PM			
Asset Set 9	**Machineries and movable Assets** Machineries at S.No.291/9P1, Kolalgiri, Uppoor Village, Udupi Taluk, Karnataka along with all movable assets and vehicles	**26.00 Lakhs**	**2.60 Lakhs**
Category G Sale of Immovable Assets (E-auction only if Asset set 9 gets bids and results in a successful auction) Date and Time of e-auction: 27.02.2026 at 05.00 PM to 06.00 PM			
Asset Set 10	**Immovable Asset (Land & Building)** All the piece and parcels of the land measuring 100 cents, situated at, S.No.291/9P1, Kolalgiri, Uppoor Village, Udupi Taluk , Karnataka together with building	**1.64 Crores**	**0.164 Crores**

1. This Sale Notice shall be read with the Complete 'e-Auction Process Information Document' (Process Document) containing details of the Assets, eligibility, E-Auction Bid Form etc which is available at https://ibbi.baanknet.com/eauction-ibbi/home or can contact the Liquidator for further details.
2. Please note that in case the E-Auction for **Asset Category A or B** does not materialise for want of bidders etc, the assets shall be sold separately as per the above Table. The liquidator reserves the right to cancel the e-auction of any or all Assets Set under any or all category(ies) and /or set of assets being sold in the e-auction. The sale of Assets under this category i.e. going concern sale is subject to approval of the Adjudicating Authority.
3. Interested bidders for the respective Category(ies) and/or Set of Asset(s) are required to submit the eligibility documents and EMD on or before **24.02.2026** as provided in the Process Document through the electronic platform only
4. The Liquidator reserves the right to amend the key terms of the sale process including timelines for any or all Category(ies) and/or Set of Assets(s) being sold in the e-auction, to the extent permissible under the applicable laws and regulations. Any information about the amendments/ extensions of any of the timelines with respect to the sale process timelines for any or all category(ies) and/or Set of Assets (s) will be available on the e-auction website and communicated to the Eligible/Qualified/Successful Bidder(s).
5. Prospective bidders shall deposit the Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) through the Baanknet auction platform only. If the bidder is found ineligible, EMD shall be liable to be forfeited.

Nothing contained herein shall constitute a binding offer or commitment for sale of assets of the Company including Sale of the Company as a whole, on a going concern basis.

Please scan the QR code below to download a Teaser Document.

Date: 05.02.2026
Place: Bengaluru

Sd/-
Ravindra Beleyur
Liquidator
Reliable Cashew Company Private Limited in Liquidation
'428,19th B Cross, 3rd Block, Jayanagar, Bengaluru 11
email:Reliable_Cashew_CIRP@beleyur.com
Phone: 080 26540193 Mobile: +91 94481 46963

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
Electrical Works

The Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer (TRD), Central Railway, Solapur, for and on behalf of the President of India invites online e-tenders on Railways e-procurement website **www.ireps.gov.in** from reputed, experienced & Licensed Electrical contractors for the following works. **Tender No**. **SUR/TD/T/2025/26R**, **Name of work:** Electrical TRD portion of work in connection with Proposed coaching maintenance depot at Tikekarwadi (Phase-1) (Re-invitation) **Estimated cost**: ₹ 5,62,96,465.20. **Bid Security**: ₹ 4,31,500/-, **Completion period**: 12 months. **Validity of offer:** 60 Days. **Date & time of tenders closing on website**: 02.03.2026 at 15.00 hrs. EXP-06

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SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Publication of E-TENDER NOTICE No. B/TRD.2025-26/38 Dt: 30.01.2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

Item of work	Approx.Value
Provision of nylon mesh of TTC and portals for preventing bird nest in Bengaluru Division. **Period of Completion : 10 Months**	Rs. 53,36,100.00/-

Last date for Submission of bids : **Upto 15.00 hrs on 20.02.2026**
For details log on : **www.ireps.gov.in**
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, Bengaluru
PUB/869/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **UTS** Moblie App from **Google Play Store** for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Publication of E-TENDER NOTICE No. B/TRD.2025-26/36 Dt: 30.01.2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

Item of work	Approx.Value
Bangalore Division-Provision of SCADA Simulator system for TPC Operations **Period of Completion : 03 Months**	Rs. 24,98,927.00/-

Last date for Submission of bids : **Upto 15.00 hrs on 20.02.2026**
For details log on : **www.ireps.gov.in**
Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer/TRD, Bengaluru
PUB/868/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **UTS** Moblie App from **Google Play Store** for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
NOTIFICATION
Bengaluru, the 27th January, 2026

S.O. 380(E) - In exercise of the powers conferred by clause 37(A) of Section 2 of the Railways Act, 1989 (Act no. 24 of 1989) the Ministry of Railway (South Western Railway, Construction Organization, Bengaluru Cantonment) hereby notifies the project, as "Special Railway Project" mentioned in the table below, in the State of Karnataka for providing National Infrastructure for a Public Purpose with effect from date of publication of the notification in the Official Gazette.

SN	Name of the Village	Village	Taluk	District
1	Construction of Road Over Bridge with LHS in lieu of LC No. 81 in Tumkur-Arsikere (TK-ASK) Section.	Koppa	Tiptur	Tumakuru

No. W.271/CN/BNC/2025-26/Land SRP/1727
For details log on : **https://egazette.gov.in**
PARDEEP PURI,
Chief Engineer/III/ Construction/Bengaluru
PUB/873/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **UTS** Moblie App from **Google Play Store** for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

EASTERN RAILWAY

Tender Notice No. 222-S/1/DEN-3/W-II Date: 04.02.2026. Following e-Tenders are invited online by Divisional Engineer/III, Eastern Railway, Sealdah, 2nd Floor, DRM Building, Kaizer Street, Sealdah, Kolkata-700014 for the following work :- **Tender No.: TN-179-25-26; Name of the Work:** Different Track Maintenance work along with all ancillary work in Senior Section Engineer/P.Way/ Bhagwangola under the jurisdiction of Assistant Engineer/Berhampore Court. **Tender Value:** ₹ 1,05,92,081.66; **EMD:** ₹ 2,03,000.00; **Completion period for the Work :** 12 Months; **Date and Time of Closing of Tender :** 27.02.2026 at 15:00 hrs.; 1. Tender Documents and other details are at **www.ireps.gov.in** The bidding for the tender is to be submitted through the e-tendering on above website. Manual offers will be summarily rejected. 2. **Date and Time of Opening Tender** is 27.02.2026 at 15:30 hrs. SDAH-382/2025-26

Tender Notice is also available at websites : www.er.indianrailways.gov.in / www.ireps.gov.in

Follow us at : @EasternRailway
@easternrailwayheadquarter

JHARIA REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, DHANBAD
e-Procurement Notice
Tender Reference No: JRDA/CIVIL/25-26/45/156
Date: 03.02.2026

1.	Name of Work	Providing and Laying PCC in back and middle side of blocks at phase – 1, Belgaria, T/s Dhanbad
2.	Estimated Cost	Rs. 3,50,81,120.00
3.	EMD	Rs. 3,50,900.00
4.	Tender Document Cost	Rs. 10,000.00
5.	Time of Completion	06 months
6.	Date/Time from which bid is available for online bidding	07.02.2026 at 03:00 PM
7.	Last Date/Time for on-line submission of bids	28.02.2026 at 05:00 PM
8.	Date and Time of Bid Opening	02.03.2026 at 11:30 AM
9.	Name and Address of Officer inviting tender	Head of Department (Civil), JRDA, Dhanbad Hatia More, Golf Ground Road, Hirapur, Dhanbad - 826001 Jharkhand, India Email: infojrda.dhn@gmail.com

Note : 1. Only e-tenders will be accepted.
2. Further details can be seen on website – https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in

Sd/-
PR 372359 Rural Development (25-26)D
Head of Department (Civil),
JRDA, Dhanbad

SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY
Publication of E-Tender Notice No. SWRSBCMEDLPIREPS2025 B dated 30.01.2026
The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, invites E-Tender for the following work.

Name of Work	Approx.Value
INVITING OPEN IREPS TENDER FOR ENTERING CONTACT FIRMS/ DISTRIBUTORS/ CHEMIST SHOPS FOR SUPPLY OF ALL THE TYPES MEDICINES ON DAY TODAY BASIS FOR FOR EMERGENCY LOCAL PURCHASE TO MEDICAL STORES OF RAILWAY HOSPITAL, BENGALURU ROUND THE CLOCK (24x7) FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS FROM THE DATE OF COMMENCEMENT OF THE SERVICE	Rs. 1,59,82,741/-

Last date for Submission of bids : **Upto 14.00 hrs on 20.02.2026**
For details log on : **www.ireps.gov.in**
Chief Medical Superintendent, Bengaluru
PUB/866/AAD360/PRB/SWR/2025-26
Download the **UTS** Moblie App from **Google Play Store** for ease of booking of unreserved tickets
South Western Railway - SWR SWRRLY @SWRAILWAYHQ @sw_railways

CENTRAL RAILWAY
SOLAPUR DIVISION
MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

Divisional Railway Manager (Works), Central Railway, Solapur on behalf of President of India, invites e-tender from the reputed firms/contractor for the following works. **Tender Notice No. 01-2026-SrDENC**, **Name of work:** (1) Provision of widening of width of PF-02 at Latur Station. (2) Provision of approach road in railway colonies under ADEN/PVR sub-division. **Approximate Cost of the work** : ₹ 75413262.26. **Earnest Money**: ₹ 527100.00, **Completion period of the work:** 6 Months. **Maintenance Period:** 12 Months. **Last date & Time of uploading quoted tender on www.ireps.gov.in website:** 23.02.2026 upto 15.00 hrs. **Date & Time of Opening of tender on www.ireps.gov.in :** 23.02.2026 at 15.30 hrs. The prospective tenderers are advised to revisit the website frequently before the date of closing of tender to note any changes/corrigenda issued for this tender. Website: **www.ireps.gov.in** EXP-05

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Modi slams Oppn for 'insulting' President

Modi, from Page 1

In an apparent reference to West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, who recently appeared before the Supreme Court in the SIR case, Modi sought to know, when people in the most prosperous countries are expelling infiltrators, why "some people want to defend them."

Moving to another poll-bound state, Assam, the prime minister said his government conferred Bharat Ratna on thespian Bhupen Hazarika, while some in the Opposition opposed it. Drawing the battle lines in Punjab, another state that will go to the polls next year, Modi launched a scathing attack on Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's remarks calling Union minister Ravneet Singh Bittu a "traitor."

"Honorable MP was called a traitor because he was a Sikh, and this is a display of the enmity against Sikhs present inside the Congress." "They insulted a man whose family was martyred for the country. Just because he changed his political ideology," PM Modi said.

Modi delivered his speech amid sustained sloganeering and a walkout by Opposition members, after he decided to skip the address in the Lok Sabha.

Referring to the slogans raised against him, Modi said, "This is not merely a slogan but shows deep hatred." Stating that the country is a force to reckon with in the global south, Modi said India is attractive to the world due to its "youth talent pool". "The demography of most developed nations is old, but we are a young country with aspirations of the youth," the PM said.

New schools in fix over 'social, emotional safety' certificate rule

School, from Page 1

D Shashi Kumar, general secretary of the Associated Management of Primary and Secondary Schools in Karnataka said, "When there are already problems with building safety and fire safety certificates, the department has added a few more. There is no clarity on the requirement or issuing authority of the new certificates demanded by the department."

Shashi Kumar further stated that cyber security is not the domain of schools.

"Teachers or managements cannot give social and emotional safety to children as they won't be aware of the emotional issues they are undergoing at home," he added.

He added that it is the government's responsibility to ensure children's cyber safety. "We have been requesting the government for several years to bring in proper regulations to ensure children's cyber security. We have submitted several representations to the government and departments concerned, but have received no response," Shashi Kumar said.

However, private schools have no objection to ensuring personal and sexual safety as it is covered under the Protection of Children from Sexual Offenses (Pocso) Act.

Department officials clarified that all these clauses have existed for years but schools had to just say 'Yes' or 'No' and no certificate was demanded.

"Just a self declaration by the schools ensuring all these three safety measures will be accepted," said Suralkar Vikas Kishor, Commissioner Department of School Education and Literacy.

India, US trade deal to be signed by mid-March: Goyal

US trade deal, from Page 1

However, India would reduce its tariffs on the American goods only after the formal signing of the agreement.

"Their (US) tariffs are executive tariffs. Our tariffs are MFN tariffs. So (our) MFN tariffs reduction only can take place after the legal agreement has been signed," Agrawal told reporters, referring to the non-discriminatory Most-Favoured Nation tariffs charged on imports.

A bilateral trade agreement between the two countries was proposed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Washington in February 2025. The two countries have also agreed to more than double two-way trade to $500 billion by 2030.

Goyal said India has signed eight trade agreements since Prime Minister Modi came into power in 2014.

The first tranche of the BTA with the US will soon become the ninth, he added.

SC upholds election of Cong MLA Nanjegowda from Malur

Court finds him winner after recount of votes

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Thursday set aside the Karnataka High Court's judgment which annulled the election of Congress member K Y Nanjegowda as MLA from the Malur constituency in Kolar district in the Karnataka Assembly elections of 2023.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi noted that even after the recounting of the votes, Nanjegowda secured 250 more votes than his opponent K S Manjunath Gowda from BJP.

The court thus upheld election of Nanjegowda.

During the hearing, the bench opened the sealed cover in the presence of the parties. The court found that even after the recount, Nanjegowda is the winner, as he secured 50,957 votes and Manjunath Gowda got 50,707 votes.

"That being so, the election of the candidate from Malur remains unaffected even after compliance with the direction of recounting of votes issued by the High Court. Consequently, we allow this appeal, to the extent that the impugned decision of setting aside the election of appellant is set aside and the election of the appellant from Malur is upheld," the bench said.

The apex court had on October 14, 2025 stayed the High Court's order and directed the Election Commission to comply with the directions to the extent of recounting of votes

and submit the result in a sealed cover before this court.

A petition was filed by K S Manjunath Gowda of the Bharatiya Janata Party, challenging the election, on the alleged irregularities in the Karnataka Assembly election.

Gowda lost to Nanjegowda by a narrow margin of 248 votes in the 2023 elections.

He filed the plea for declaring Nanjegowda's election as void. He also sought recount of votes, and declaring him as the elected candidate.

Gowda alleged votes were improperly accepted in favour of Nanjegowda and votes favouring him were rejected. The video recordings, which could have verified this, were withheld. The counsel also alleged that the returning officer had not passed any order on the petitioner's recount application.

The High Court allowed his plea, observing the absence of records from the presiding officer made the election's outcome questionable.

'It's victory for truth'

Malur MLA K Y Nanjegowda described the Supreme Court verdict as the victory for truth. "I was under mental stress for the past two and half years, and the verdict has come as a breather. I will now focus on development works in the constituency during the rest of my term," he said. He was addressing a press meet in Kolar on Thursday.

Netravathi-Hemavathi river linking not feasible: Centre

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Jal Shakti Minister C R Patil on Thursday said that the linking of Netravathi-Hemavathi may be dropped as there is no surplus water available in Netravathi basin after implementation of the Yettinahole project.

Though the pre-feasibility report on linking of Netravathi-Hemavathi was completed in 1994, no further studies have been taken up since. After implementation of Yettinahole project in 2014, no surplus water was available in Netravathi basin for diversion through this link, the minister told Rajya Sabha.

MBP writes to Modi, seeks feasibility study for Bengaluru-Mumbai bullet train project

BENGALURU, DHNS: Infrastructure Development Minister M B Patil has written to Prime Minister Narendra Modi and union ministers Nirmala Sitharaman, Ashwini Vaishnaw and V Somanna, urging them to announce a high-speed rail (bullet train) corridor between Bengaluru and Mumbai.

He said the project would bring significant benefits to both Karnataka and Maharashtra.

In the letter, dated February 3, Patil stated that the Mumbai–Pune high-speed rail corridor already announced in the union budget could be extended up to Bengaluru.

He welcomed the budget announcements of high-speed rail corridors between Bengaluru-Hyderabad and Bengaluru-Chennai but pointed out that both routes would run for only about 100 km within Karnataka, limiting the benefits to the state.

Patil explained that a high-speed rail link between Bengaluru and Pune would bring substantial benefits to central and northern Karnataka, as well as districts such as Sangli and Kolhapur in western Maharashtra. Such a project would transform the economic and industrial landscape of Hubballi-Dharwad, Belagavi, Davangere, Tumakuru and other cities, he explained.

Patil urged that a comprehensive feasibility study be undertaken for a high-speed rail project between Bengaluru and Mumbai.

Separately, Patil welcomed union ministers Pralhad Joshi and H D Kumaraswamy for taking up the issue with Vaishnaw.

"There is no politics involved in this. The initiative should not remain limited to discussions alone, but must be taken to its logical conclusion," he told reporters on Thursday. "There must be an efficient and world-class connectivity system between Bengaluru and Mumbai."

Vijayendra meets Nitin Nabin

NEW DELHI, DHNS: BJP state president B Y Vijayendra on Thursday met party national president Nitin Nabin and discussed about the candidates for the upcoming elections to the Legislative Council (Graduates and Teachers) constituencies.

Speaking to reporters, Vijayendra said during the meeting, he apprised Nabin about the bypolls to Bagalkot and Davangere South Assembly segments. Elections for the Greater Bengaluru Authority and other local bodies were also discussed.

Vijayendra also apprised the party's national president about the present political situation in Karnataka.

Three-day Mysuru Sante-2026 from today

MYSURU, DHNS: Mysuru Sante-2026, an event celebrating the cultural splendour, heritage, tourism, and commerce of Mysuru, will be held for three days - February 6, 7, and 8 - at Maharaja College Grounds from 11 am to 10 pm. The festival, aimed at promoting local entrepreneurship, includes music, comedy shows, dance, and various entertainment programmes. The event aims to encourage women and local entrepreneurs, while providing a platform for families, friends, and tourists.

The attractions of the festival will be shopping, food, entertainment and cultural programmes. Over 100 stalls from across Karnataka, featuring festive apparel, garden artefacts, home decor, and lifestyle products will be showcased. The entry fee is Rs 60.

18 killed in explosion at illegal coal mine in Meghalaya

Meghalaya, from Page 1

"It takes about three hours to reach the spot," he said." The mines are dug vertically inside the interior, hilly and forested villages and coal is extracted from horizontal shafts. The workers even crawl inside the shafts which are given the name "rat hole mines".

Similar accidents had taken place in coal mines several times in the past, including in East Jaintia Hills district, even after coal mining in Meghalaya was banned by the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in 2014.

The state government had faced a lot of criticism when 13 workers were buried alive in a similar accident in Ksan village in East Jaintia Hills district in 2018.

Despite frequent accidents, the National People's Party-led government in the state, however, moved the Supreme Court challenging the NGT ban. The government, including CM Sangma, said a complete ban on mining had severely impacted livelihoods as many depended on coal mining.

In 2019, the Supreme Court revoked the NGT order and asked the government to come up with an action plan for scientific mining. The NPP government in January last year granted permission to three firms for scientific coal mine.

Legal mining began in March last year. But the state government failed to stop illegal and unscientific coal mines.

◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Dry weather prevailed over Coastal Karnataka, South Interior Karnataka and North Interior Karnataka

Forecast Feb 06: Dry weather likely to prevail over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Belagavi	29.8	16.8	00
Bidar	28.4	14.8	00
Vijayapura	30.5	14	00
Dharwad	30.2	13.5	00
Haveri	30.8	15.6	00
Kalaburagi	33	18.8	00
Raichur	30.4	17	00
COASTAL			
Honnavar	36.9	21.1	00
Karwar	37	23	00
Shirali	NA	NA	NA
Mangaluru	35.2	24.4	00

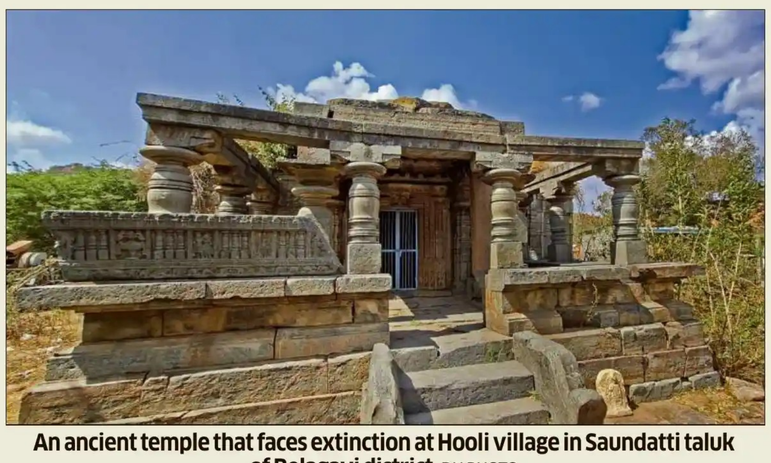
INTERIOR SOUTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	NA	NA	NA
Bengaluru	29.2	15.7	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	NA	NA	NA
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	29.7	16.2	00
Davangere	30.5	14.8	00
Hassan	31.3	13.1	00
Mysuru	30.6	16	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	29.4	9.8	00
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	22.9	10.2	00
Kolkata	27.7	15.8	00
Mumbai	35	20.5	00
Chennai	31.2	21	00
Pune	30.5	14.2	00
Hyderabad	28.8	18.6	00
Th'puram	34.1	23.2	00

UTTERLY UNCARING

Lest marvels in stone from Chalukyan era melt away in time

Weeds, encroachments mar 100 temples; just 1 under ASI care

RAJU GAVALI
BELAGAVI, DHNS



An ancient temple that faces extinction at Hooli village in Saundatti taluk of Belagavi district. DH PHOTO

Ancient temples of archaeological importance at Hooli village in Saundatti taluk, which once used to be a seat of Shaivism, face the threat of extinction if necessary measures to conserve them are not taken.

Temples from 11th and 12th centuries from the rule of Kalyani Chalukyas are a visual delight, but are in a poor state, covered by bushes and shrubs and due to encroachments.

Residents say that the village has 101 temples and as many wells. Lack of maintenance has resulted in overgrowth around the temples and the wells. Encroachments by local residents pose a threat to the monuments.

The temples have huge potential for tourism, but they aren't known much to the outside world, due to the lack of enough publicity. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has taken over the Panchalingeshwara temple.

But the Bhavanishankara, Andhakeshwara, Kalameshwara, Madaneshwara, Tarakeshwara, Kashi Vishwanatha, Beeradeva, Suryanarayana and Hooli Sangameshwara Ajjanavaru temples are yet to be included in the list of monuments of the ASI or the state archaeology department.

ASI museums director Smita Reddy told *DH* that the temples at Hooli were ancient and need to be conserved.

"The ASI has taken over Panchalingeshwara temple and efforts are on to include other temples in the list of the state archaeology department to get them declared as protected monuments," she said.

"We have written to the tahsildar as also the Saundatti TMC and Hooli gram panchayat to clear encroachments from premises of temples. After gold was found at Lakkundi in Gadag, we fear that treasure hunters may damage temples at Hooli too. It is myth and imagination that treasure is hidden under idols in ancient temples," she said.

Mahadevappa Kalli, the panchayat development officer of Hooli GP, said, "We get the overgrowth cleaned twice a year and also a keep watch on the temples to ensure that none damages the structures. We received a letter from ASI on January 1, regarding measures to clean the premises of temples. At the local body meeting on January 27, it was decided to clear the overgrowth."

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
MINOR IRRIGATION & GROUND WATER DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
Executive Engineer, Minor Irrigation & Ground Water Development Division,Hassan

IFT No.34/2025-26, Dated: 02.02.2026 EXTENTION-1

As per the above notification last date of receipt of tender was 09-02-2026. Tender dates for the work in the above notification are extended. As per the extension last date of receipt of tenders are 10-02-2026 upto 17.00 hours Technical Bid will be opened on 11-02-2026. Qualified bidders financial bid will be opend on 12-02-2026 at 11.00 hours. Further details can be had from E-Proc portal (www.eproc.karnataka.gov.in) and the above office during office working hours.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, MI & GWD Division, Hassan.

ವಾಸಾಸಂಇ/ಹಿಸನಿ/ಹಾಸನ/1027/ಕೆಎಸ್ಎಂಸಿಎ/2025–26

Kodagu Institute of Medical Sciences Madikeri
(Government of Karnataka - Autonomous Institution)
Ph-08272-298220 Website: www.kimskodagu.karnataka.gov.in

No: DME/2025-26/SE0661 Date: 04-02-2026

Tender Notification

Under Signed invites e-tender notification in two bid system from eligible tenderers through e-procurement portal https:kppp.karanataka.gov.in GOK, for OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF CARDIAC FACILITY ESTABLISHED IN KODAGU INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, MADIKERI ON PPP MODE last date for upload is 06-04-2026 for more information contact e-procurement portal or office of the undersigned.

Sd/- **Director and Dean KoIMS Madikeri**

KARNATAKA HOUSING BOARD
Office of the Executive Engineer, No. 52, B.S.R. Layout, Konasandra, Jigani, Suryanagar 4th Phase, Bengaluru - 560105.
Email: khbsnrph4@gmail.com Ph: 080-24482702

PUBLIC NOTICE

This is to inform to the public that **STATE LEVEL ENVIRONMENT IMPACT ASSESSMENT AUTHORITY, KARNATAKA** (Constituted by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Government of India) has issued the Environmental Clearance to **Karnataka Housing Board** vide **File No. SEIAA 126 CON 2025 and EC identification No. EC25B3812KA5496641N dated 27.01.2026** for Modification in the existing Environmental Clearance and Expansion of Development of Sites and Service Scheme at **Suryanagar 4th Phase, Swami Vivekananda Layout (Pradhana Mantri Township)** in Sy. Nos. 29/1A & Others of Konasandra Village, Sy. Nos. 41/1 & Others of Bommandahalli Village, Sy Nos. 1/1 & Others of Kadujakkanahalli Village, Sy Nos. 9/1 & Others of Indlawadi Village, Sy Nos. 1,2/1 & Others of Baggandoddi Village, Anekal Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District. The Environmental Clearance issued by the State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority, Karnataka can be accessed at the website **https://parivesh.nic.in**

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
KHB, Suryanagar 4th Phase, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/YC/5343/2025-26

BENGALURU NORTH CITY CORPORATION
Office of the Executive Engineer, Special Division, Amruthahalli Main Road, Byatarayanapura, Bengaluru - 560092.

No. BNCC/EE/SD/TEND/12/2025-26 Date: 05-02-2026

INVITATION FOR TENDERS (IFT)

Two cover system (Only through GoK KPP Portal)

The Executive Engineer, Special Division, BNCC, Bengaluru on behalf the Commissioner, BNCC invites Tenders from eligible registered agencies in any State Govt. organisations for the works detailed below.

Sl. No.	Name of the Work
1	Hiring, Operation and Maintenance of 10 Nos. Self Propelled Mechanical Road Sweeping Machines on per Kilometer basis for 10 years for Sweeping HDC, Arterial and Sub-Arterial Roads with in Bengaluru North City Corporation.

Calendar of Events: **(1)** Tender documents may be downloaded from KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** **(2)** Date of Pre-bid meeting : **24-02-2026 upto 3.00 pm. (3)** Last date & time for queries : **24-02-2026 upto 4.00 pm. (4)** Last Date &Time for receipt of tenders: **16-03-2026 at 4.00 pm. (5)** Date of opening of Pre-qualification / Technical bid : **17-03-2026 at 4.30 pm, if possible next working day. (6)** Date of opening of Financial bid (if possible) : **21-03-2026 at 4.00 pm, if possible.** Further details may be obtained from the above office during office hours or from KPP Portal **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

Sd/- Executive Engineer, Special Division, BNCC

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT DIVISION KOPPAL. Phone No:08539-222318.email:eepwdkpl2@gmail.com

IFT No. PWD:DK:TDR:2025-26: 3967 **Date: 05-02-2026.**

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER (IFT)

The Executive Engineer, Public works Department Division Koppal invites tenders from the eligible tenderers as per standard bid documents on http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in Portal. Head of Account : 4059 CMIDP 422 SCP, 3054 MDR maintenance, 3054 SH Bridge & MDR Bridge Maintenance, 2059 (NP) PWD Building Maintenance and 2216 PWD Quarters and Judicial Quarters maintenance, 4059 CMIDP and KKRDB Macro General during 2025-26. Two cover Tender procedure as per Rule 28 of the KTPP Act shall be followed. For more information the contractor can contact the under signed during office hours on Phone No. 08539 – 222318 and all informations regarding tenders can be had from website http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in. Total No of Works:11 (Work Indent No: 30602,32307,32434, 32139,32238, 30613/Call-2, 30612/Call-2, 30611/Call-2, 30597/Call-2, 30604/Call-2 and 30022/Call-2) invited. Sl.No. 1 to 5 Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders : **12-02-2026** Time 16.00, Sl.No. 1 to 5 Date of Tenders opening : **13-02-2026** Time 16.30, Sl.No. 1 Date of Financial Bid opening : **18-02-2026** Time 11.00, Sl.No. 6 to 11 Last Date & Time for receipt of tenders **17-02-2026** Time 16.00, Sl.No. 6 to 11 Date of Technical Bid opening **18-02-2026** Time 16.30, Sl.No. 6 to 11 Date of Financial Bid opening **23-02-2026** Time 11:00. Minimum & Maximum Estimate Amount Rs. 5.00 Lakhs & Rs. 500.00 Lakhs respectively.. The tender documents can be downloaded from the above website address, EMD, Time for Tender, Reservation Queries/ Clarification, Date of Financial Bid Opening, Date & Other information as mentioned in KPPP Portal. any changes either in tender date or any other condition tenderers can view in http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in portal.

Sd/- EE, PWD Division, Koppal

DIPR/Koppal/657/KSMCA/2025-26

Process e-khata applications in two days: DKS

BENGALURU, DHNS: Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar on Thursday directed officials to dispose of e-khata applications within two days and announced 10 passport-style citizen service centres to streamline property records in Bengaluru.

Speaking to reporters, he said 60% of e-khatas were now being issued within 24 hours, while 9.31 lakh of the 9.34 lakh applications received so far had been processed. Regarding conversion from 'B' khata to 'A' khata, Shivakumar said around 7,000 applicants had submitted requests but were required to provide property sketches.

Cong MLA regrets remark on BJP lawmaker's wife in Assembly

BENGALURU, DHNS: Congress MLA from Arasikere, Shivalinge Gowda, on Thursday expressed regret for his remarks in the Assembly referring to the wife of a BJP legislator Sharanu Salagar, but maintained that he was provoked by continuous personal attacks from BJP members during the proceedings.

"I only said he had become an MLA only because of his tahsildar wife. I was wrong to drag women into our fight. I regret speaking about his wife. Beyond that, I have no other regrets about the words I spoke against BJP leaders," said Gowda, during a press conference in Bengaluru.

Gowda was referring to his outburst against the BJP legislators in the Assembly on Wednesday, when the BJP and JDS were protesting in the well of the House demanding the resignation of the excise minister over an alleged excise scam. Gowda, who was speaking in favour of the resolution (against VB-G Ram G) was irked by the constant slogan shouting by the opposition leaders.

"BJP members disrupted my speech, made personal comments and called me a thief. They were jumping around in the House. I asked the LOP if he was conducting a mimicry show and told them to stop behaving like monkeys," he said, adding that his language was "colloquial" and not uncivilised.

"I am a member for the last 20 years and have never spoken anything offensive or hurtful to anyone. The media should show both sides (of the story). Everyone heard me shout at them as my mike was on. But nobody heard or saw how they provoked me as they were in the well," he rued.

Denying allegations that he insulted the RSS, Gowda said he respected it as a "disciplined" organisation and that his remarks were directed at BJP MLA Vedavyas Kamath for repeatedly interrupting him. "I told Kamath that he was bringing a bad name to RSS. In the heat of the moment, my choice of words may have been unpleasant," he said.

He rejected BJP's charge that he had "betrayed" JD(S) patriarch H D Deve Gowda, saying he quit the party as per the wishes of his supporters. "Why single me out for party hopping," he asked.

Cabinet clears Rs 67-cr AI-driven software to track fake news

Home department to implement project across state

BENGALURU, DHNS:

The Cabinet on Thursday cleared Rs 67.26-crore 'Social media analytics solutions', a software driven by Artificial Intelligence, to verify digital content and posts on social media platforms to prevent the spreading of fake news.

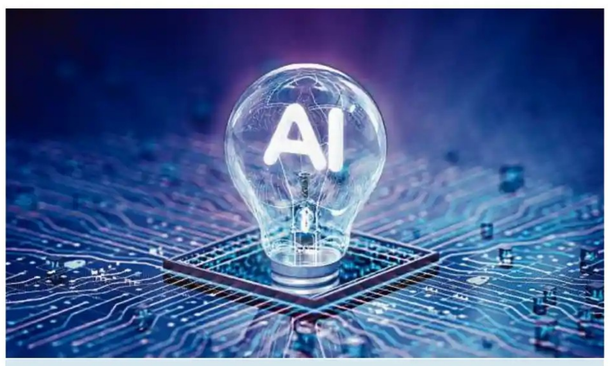
Speaking to reporters after the Cabinet meeting, Law and Parliamentary Minister H K Patil said the traditional methods have failed to prevent fake news and hence the government decided to go for AI-driven technology. "This AI software will analyse the digital contents and monitor activities such as terrorism, hate speech, inciting communal violence and kidnapping of children or any anti-social activities disturbing the law and order in society," Patil said.

The minister added that the software will not only do a fact-check, but identifies the source from where the content is generated.

The project will be implemented under Home Department at all the 31 districts. With this new technology, digital contents spreading hatred on various social media platforms including Facebook, YouTube, X, Instagram will be identified and the authorities concerned will be notified.

The Cabinet also cleared the amendments proposed to Karnataka Gram Swaraj and Panchayat Raj (amendment) Act 2026. With this, ballot paper will be used even for Zilla Panchayat and Taluk Panchayat elections. "It has been decided to introduce ballot paper for Bengaluru Corporation elections and now the same will be extended to Zilla Panchayat, Taluk Panchayat and Gram Panchayat elections," Patil said.

The meeting deferred discussion on Special Intensive Revision of (SIR) voters list.



Rs 19.18 cr for GBA to buy autos, cars under Sarathi

The state cabinet on Thursday approved the Greater Bengaluru Authority's proposal to receive Rs 19.18 crore in financial assistance for the purchase of autorickshaws or cars under the Sarathi programme.

The Cabinet also cleared a proposal to procure e-vending vehicles for street vendors at a cost of Rs 42.84 crore.

In addition, administrative approval was granted for a Rs 39.10-crore project to supply 15 million litres per day (MLD) of treated water from the Jakkur sewage treatment plant to the Yelahanka Combined Cycle Power Plant (CCPP).

The project cost includes operation and maintenance for five years.

Clarification on Hate Speech Bill to prez

The Cabinet has decided to send clarification report regarding the Karnataka Hate Speech and Hate Crimes Prevention Bill, 2025 to the President of India. According to sources, the report will be submitted on Feb 9. It can be recalled that Governor Thaawarchand Gehlot reserved the Bill for the consideration and assent of the President, citing significant constitutional, legal and procedural concerns.

Politics in flux as Siddu begins pre-budget meetings

DKS 'shoring up numbers'; caste groups huddle

BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Thursday kickstarted pre-budget consultations, reviewing the demands of 10 departments as he prepares to present his 17th budget amid mounting fiscal strain and political uncertainty over possible transfer of power.

All eyes are now on AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge after Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's assurances that Siddaramaiah and Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar would be "summoned" to Delhi for "talks". The CM's blunt reaction to the union budget reflected the pressure he faces. "We got no relief," he said, hinting at expectations of central assistance.

The CM's blunt reaction to the union budget reflected the pressure he faces. "We got no relief," he said, hinting at expectations of central assistance

Fiscal tightrope walk

The burden of flagship guarantee schemes – Rs 56,000 crore, along with impending gram panchayat, taluk and zilla panchayat elections - has sharply constrained fiscal space for the Congress government in the state.

The chief minister has repeatedly flagged cuts in central transfers, claiming Karnataka loses about Rs 20,000 crore annually due to GST rationalisation and suffered cumulative loss of Rs 1.25 lakh crore under 14th Finance Commission.

SHIVAGANGA BASAVARAJ
Congress MLA

"I would like to see Shivakumar become CM today. But the party should take a call.

Karnataka's total liabilities are projected to touch Rs 7.64 lakh crore by end of 2025-26.

As finance minister, Siddaramaiah has proposed gross borrowings of Rs 1.16 lakh crore to bridge a projected revenue deficit of Rs 19,262 crore, marking the third consecutive revenue-deficit budget.

The BJP has branded him the "biggest borrowing CM", pointing to plans to raise Rs 93,000 crore in the last quarter alone. Politically, the churn is intensifying. The Shivakumar camp is gearing up, with reports of discreet meetings to consolidate numbers.

During the recent legislature session, the deputy CM asserted that his strength stood at "140 legislators (MLAs), including Siddaramaiah", countering Opposition jibes about a divided Congress.

Party MLA Shivaganga Basavaraj on Thursday urged the high command to end speculation.

"I would like to see Shivakumar become CM today. But the party should take a call," he said. Signalling growing assertion by social blocs, over 20 SC/ST MLAs met at Home Minister G Parameshwara's residence on Tuesday to discuss political representation and leadership roles.

Separately, Lingayat MLAs led by Industries Minister M B Patil held a meeting to underline their numerical strength, amid talk of leadership change or Cabinet reshuffle.

"We are 34 MLAs, the biggest bloc," Patil said.

School girl found pregnant; principal, warden suspended

CHINTAMANI (CHIKKABALLAPUR DISTRICT), DHNS: A class 10 student of Kittur Rani Channamma residential school at in the taluk, was found to be pregnant. Following the incident, Karnataka Residential Educational Institutions Society (KREIS) director P S Kantharaju suspended principal D V Nagarathnamma and in-charge hostel warden B S Savithakumari pending inquiry.

The incident came to light after the school staff found changes in the girl's body and subjected her to medical examination at Chintamani government hospital in the presence of her parents.

The KREIS rules laid down in 2022 stipulate regular health checks for girls from the doctors of the government hospital. The girls should be subjected to medical examination after they return from holidays.

In this case, the principal and the warden have not followed the rules and hence they have been suspended on charges of dereliction of duty, the order issued by KREIS director stated.

WEAVES OF LIFE

A woman weaves bamboo items which she sells to make a living, in Mysuru on Thursday. DH PHOTO/ANUP RAGH T

Transport dept launches new tech for road accident probe

BENGALURU, DHNS: The closing ceremony of National Road Safety Month 2026 was hosted at the Palace Grounds on Thursday.

Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy launched Electronic Detailed Accident Report (e-DAR), a new technology aimed at strengthening the investigation of road accidents and providing speedy insurance compensation, at the daylong event. Multiple stages were set up to conduct technical sessions and panel discussions on road safety and the implementation of e-DAR, with the help of doctors, insurance officials, advocates and IT experts.

"Road safety is not just a matter of traffic management, but it is a question of life and death for every citizen. No judicial process can bring back a lost life. Therefore, prevention of accidents should be our top priority," said Chief Justice of Karnataka High Court Justice Vibhu Bakhru.

Between 2019 and 2025, more than 2,13,000 road accidents occurred in Karnataka, in which more than 60,000 people lost their lives, many of which were pedestrians.

The programme was organised by the Karnataka State Legal Services Authority, Transport Department, and the Police Department, among others.

Nearly 12% of landowners give consent for 74-km B'luru Business Corridor project

BENGALURU, DHNS

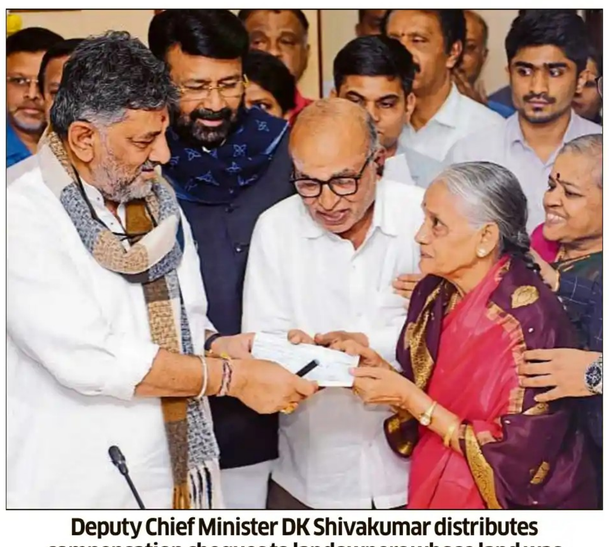
Nearly 12% of the 3,686 landowners have agreed to part with their land for the formation of the 74-km Bengaluru Business Corridor (BBC) project, official data shows.

Developed commercial sites and transferable development rights (TDR) certificates have emerged as the most preferred forms of compensation among the five options offered by the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA).

The project requires 1,810 acres of land, owned by 3,586 farmers and private individuals. So far, 430 landowners, covering a total extent of 212 acres, have given their consent for acquisition.

Those who have agreed include Public Works Department Minister Satish Jarkiholi and Pulakeshinagar MLA AC Srinivas.

The development marks a significant step forward for the BDA, which has struggled to implement the project for nearly two decades. In October last year, the state cabinet approved five compensation options for landowners, including cash, TDR, additional floor area ratio (FAR), and developed residential or commercial sites.



Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar distributes compensation cheques to landowners whose land was acquired for the Bengaluru Business Corridor project. PHOTO: BDA

On Thursday, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar handed over compensation certificates to a few landowners and reviewed the project, which is proposed to connect Tumakuru Road and Hosur Road on the city's outskirts.

During the review meeting, attended by Jarkiholi and BDA Chairman NA Haris, officials presented the recently finalised detailed project report (DPR).

Shivakumar directed officials to expedite land acquisition and was informed that tenders for civil works for one of the three packages — between Tumakuru Road and Ballari Road — would be floated by the end of March.

LK Atheeq, Chairperson of Bengaluru Business Corridor Ltd; Tushar Girinath, Additional Chief Secretary, Urban Development Department; and Major Manivannan, Commissioner, BDA, were also present.

Service upgrade

Earlier in the day, the Deputy Chief Minister inaugurated a newly established Tapal (mail) centre at the BDA office, aimed at ensuring timely responses, improved monitoring, and quicker resolution of public grievances.

Drug awareness campaign in KSRTC buses

BENGALURU, DHNS: Home Minister G Parameshwara on Thursday announced that the State government is set to launch a massive drug awareness campaign across all Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation (KSRTC) buses. The initiative aims to strengthen the government's vision of a "Drug-Free Karnataka" by educating the public, particularly students, on the devastating effects of narcotics.

Speaking at the valedictory ceremony of the National Road Safety Month 2026 the minister emphasised that awareness must begin at the grassroots level. "To build a drug-free state, we must ensure that students and the youth are fully aware of the hazards of drug consumption. KSRTC buses, which cover the length and breadth of the state, will serve as a vital medium for this outreach," he said.

Parameshwara noted that state recorded 43,000 accidents recently. He highlighted the success of identifying and rectifying 'black spots' on the Bengaluru-Mysuru Highway, which saw a significant drop in fatalities after intervention by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

The minister also lauded the role of technology in urban safety, noting that over 10,000 AI-enabled cameras have been installed at 500 junctions across Bengaluru. "Every junction is now under the watchful eyes of the Traffic Command Centre. This has not only helped in penalising rule-breakers but has also led to a notable decline in traffic violations," he added.

Man dies in elephant attack in Bandipur reserve limits

MYSURU, DHNS: A 70-year-old man was trampled to death by an elephant in the early hours of Thursday in T Matakere Colony, Sargur taluk, Mysuru district, under Moleyur forest range of Bandipur Tiger Reserve.

Maada, the victim, was working as a watchman in a temple. He had come to answer call of nature when a wild elephant is suspected to have attacked him. The body was handed over to his family members, after post mortem at Sargur taluk hospital, according to RFO, Hediyala range, K R Narayan.

Bandipur Tiger Reserve Conservator of Forests S Prabhakaran visited the spot, met his family members and interacted with the villagers.

"An elephant in the region has vision issue. There were complaints that it was frequently coming to the villages on the fringes of Moleyur range causing damage to property and crops. Forest department personnel drove it back to forest on Wednesday. The incident is said to have occurred when the elephant was returning to forest. We are writing to the higher officials, to seek permission to rescue it."

He said that Maada is survived by his wife and three daughters. "We have taken measures to pay a compensation of Rs 20 lakh to his family, and a job to one of his daughters," Prabhakaran said.

CCB arrests former rowdy sheeter under KCOCA

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Central Crime Branch (CCB) of the Bengaluru police on Thursday said it had arrested a former rowdy sheeter under the stringent Karnataka Control of Organised Crimes Act, 2000 (KCOCA).

The accused has been identified as Yashaswini alias Yashaswini Gowda, 47, a former rowdy-sheeter of the Basavanagudi police station.

According to the police, on August 26, 2025, around 6.30 pm, a group of rowdy elements allegedly kidnapped Manoj, a real estate businessman, near Modi Hospital Road under the jurisdiction of the Mahalakshmi Layout police station. A case was subsequently registered by the CCB.

"In connection with the case, officers of the CCB's Organised Crime Wing, West Division, arrested Yashaswini on February 5, 2026," the CCB said in a statement, adding that eight to 10 criminal cases are already registered against the accused across various police stations in Bengaluru.

Further investigation is underway.

Kumaraswamy seeks train halting at Maddur, Mandya

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Union Steel Minister H D Kumaraswamy on Thursday said that Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw assured him of providing halt for Bengaluru-Mangaluru-Murudeshwara train at Maddur and Mandya.

Kumaraswamy, who met Vaishnaw here, also made several requests including increase in the passenger coaches for Chamundi Express train modernisation of Maddur and Sakleshpura railway stations, new train from Hassan to Mumbai via Mangaluru and sanctioning of Hejjala-Chamarajanagar railway line via Yelandur.

Separately, former PM H D Deve Gowda also submitted a memorandum to Vaishnaw, in which he requested that the Bengaluru-Hyderabad bullet train project be extended to Bidar.

HC division bench stays order on free passes at Kanakapura toll plaza

BENGALURU, DHNS

A division bench of the Karnataka High Court on Thursday stayed a single-bench order on the collection of toll from residents living near the Somanahalli toll plaza on Kanakapura Road along National Highway 209.

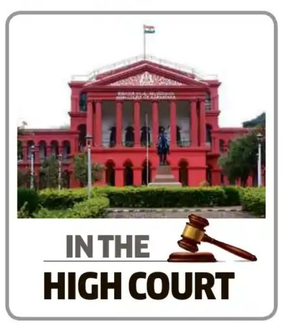
The division bench, comprising Chief Justice Vibhu Bakhru and Justice CM Poonacha, passed the interim order on an appeal filed by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). It also issued notices to the petitioners before the single bench — residents of Somanahalli and Nelaguli villages.

Earlier, the single bench had directed the NHAI and the project proponent of the NH-209 widening work to issue free local resident passes within 30 days, without levying any toll or user fee.

The direction extended to all similarly placed residents who apply for such passes, subject to verification of residency, to enable unrestricted ingress and egress through the toll plaza for access to homes, agricultural lands, workplaces and essential services.

The single bench had observed that there was no service road or alternative road, and that a request for a Closed User Fee Collection System — toll collection based on the actual distance travelled — had been rejected.

Challenging the order, the NHAI argued that the directions ran contrary to the Supreme Court's judgment in NHAI Vs R Murali, which dealt with similar facts.



The apex court had ruled in favour of the NHAI, citing provisions for concessional passes at a toll plaza in Thirumangalam, Tamil Nadu, while setting aside similar directions issued by the Madras High Court.

The NHAI further submitted that two-wheelers and tractors are exempt from toll fees and that concessional passes costing Rs 340 per month are already being provided to local residents.

Observing that the issues raised by the NHAI required detailed consideration, the division bench posted the matter for further hearing on April 23.

The single bench had observed that there was no service road or alternative road, and that a request for a Closed User Fee Collection System — toll collection based on the actual distance travelled — had been rejected.

Gratitude for recovery shouldn't translate into reverence for individuals: Barbara O'Neill

ASRA MAVAD
BENGALURU, DHNS

International health educator and author Barbara O'Neill hosted a wellness session at the JN Tata Auditorium, Indian Institute of Science (IISc) on Thursday.

Titled 'Healing Blueprint', it included two lectures—on gut health and hormonal balance. It explored key aspects of preventive health, natural healing principles, detoxification, nutrition and sustainable lifestyle practices.

Barbara brought to the city a philosophy that deliberately distances itself from the idea of the 'healer'.

Barbara O'Neill

"I am constantly saying to people, I cannot heal you, but your body can," O'Neill said in an interview ahead of the session.

"No man can heal another man, but we can teach people how to give their body the right conditions for healing." This distinction has been central to her work in natural health, spread across 4 decades.

Barbara, who has previously given similar lectures across the globe, is known for questioning the authority often claimed by wellness practitioners.

In a country like India, where alternative health figures are sometimes revered, she shared how the culture made her uncomfortable. Gratitude for recovery, she added, should not translate into reverence for individuals.

At the heart of Barbara's work is the belief in the body's innate capacity to heal — a position that has also attracted criticism for potentially encouraging people to delay medical intervention.

She rejects the idea of quick fixes. "With natural healing, there's no quick fix. It takes time. It might take 20 years to get sick, but it won't take 20 years to get well. But you have to remain patient for at least one year," she said.

Asked about Bengaluru's growing alternative healing culture, while Barbara acknowledged India's traditions of water therapies and herbal practices, she warned against reductionism. "I'm very cautious to label one thing as a wonder cure," she said.

"The responsibility teachers have is that what they present should be true. I don't present anything unless I know that it is true, because I've looked at the science and I've also tried it," she added, stressing on accountability in an era when wellness advice circulates widely on social media.

Barbara has authored two books, 'Sustain Me: A Handbook of Natural Remedies' and 'Self-Heal by Design'.

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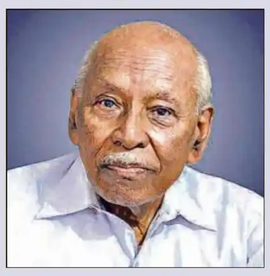

Joseph Stanislaus
16 Aug 1934 - 4 Feb 2026

With deep sadness and hope in the Resurrection, we announce the passing of Joseph Stanislaus, former Chief Design Engineer at HAL. A loving husband of 64 years, a devoted father to five daughters & proud grandfather to seven grandchildren. A funeral Mass will be held at Resurrection Church, Old Madras Road on Saturday, 7th February 2026 at 3:00 PM. He will be deeply missed by all who knew him.

Backyard bird count from Feb 13 to 16

BENGALURU: The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) will return this month between February 13 and 16, said Bird Count India, the consortium of over 70 birding and conservation organisations.

The GBBC includes Campus Bird Count, a sister event unique to India where students will take part in monitoring and recording birds.

Students can watch birds anywhere in campus for at least 15 minutes during February 13-16, identify all birds seen or heard and share the sightings using the eBird app. For guidance support & queries, visit birdcount.in/counts/gbbc/.

Last year, 270 campuses took part in exercise & uploaded 8,000 bird lists. Campus communities nationwide are again taking the lead in documenting birds.

Shrinking of B'ghatta ESZ fuelled wildlife conflicts, cut greenery: Report

'Post 2020 order, layouts, resorts mushroomed around national park'

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI
BENGALURU, DHNS:

The shrinking of Bannerghatta National Park's (BNP) eco sensitive zone (ESZ) fuelled a rapid land use change in the sensitive area which is reflected in steady rise in the number of wildlife conflicts over the years.

The central empowered committee (CEC), which placed its report before the Supreme Court on January 5, has highlighted problems that have cropped up after the ESZ was reduced from the range of 100 metre-4.5 km (as proposed in the draft notification) to 100 metre-1 km. The committee noted that the reduction of the ESZ directly affected three elephant corridors.

Even before the reduction of ESZ, the agricultural lands around BNP were changing quickly.

An assessment of the 260 sq km core area and its 5 km buffer by researchers from Indian Institute of Science (IISc) showed that the vegetation cover fell from 85.78% in 1973 to 66.37% in 2015.

This period had seen agriculture and horticulture activities along with mining and built-up areas.

Since the publication of the final notification in March 2020, largescale development works have been taken up in the area.

The Karnataka Housing Board's mega layout (Suryanagar phase 4) spread over 2,500 acres is the biggest project taking place in an area which was erstwhile part of ESZ.

Farm lands in the surrounding area have been turning into villa projects and premium residential layouts since the Covid-19 crisis.

Bringing area under ESZ essentially helps the government to regulate commercial activities while promoting activities that are eco-friendly.

Unbridled development works, however, have not been limited to residential projects.

Resorts, a major education institution spread over 300 acres and new roads connecting the facilities have also come up over the years.

One year prior to the shrinking of ESZ, experts from IISc warned that such reduction would fuel land use change and thus affect conservation.

In their paper 'Sustainable Management of BNP, India, with Insights on Land Cover Dynamics', T V Ramachandra and Bharath Setturu studied the 5-km buffer area around BNP and pointed to dangers ahead.

The paper showed that urbanisation was already taking a toll on the buffer. The dry deciduous and moist deciduous forests, which together constituted 53% of the buffer in 1973, have come down to 32%. The urban growth jumped from 0.4% to 4.5% during the same time.

Ramachandra proposed a graded ESZ divided into four eco sensitive regions (ESRs) based on datasets. ESR 1 prioritised biological, geo climatic, ecological, environmental, hydrological, social and other sensitive parameters. ESR 2 included regions of higher sensitivity, followed by ESR 3 (high sensitivity) and ESR 4 (moderate sensitivity).

"The sensitivity was decided by a weightage which was assigned based on consolidated ecological value, not just elephant and tigers. We placed emphasis on protecting and maintaining physical and biological integrity of the BNP buffer region," he said.

CONFLICT EFFECT

Years	Crop Damage	Cattle Kill	Property Damage
2021- 22	1,227	53	108
2022- 23	1,520	60	122
2023- 24	1,377	86	194
2024- 25	1,312	141	306
2025- 26*	1,094	106	181

*Data for 2025-26 (till November)

Face-off with jumbos, leopards up; cattle kills rise

The BNP has 6 ranges and the forest department has said those with exposure to revenue & mixed use areas see frequent conflict incidents. Man-animal conflicts have gone up in last few years. Data from forest department showed that the total number of conflicts in 2022-23 was 2,128. It went up to 2,386 the next year. While elephants accounted for over 95% of the incidents, leopards came a distant second. Leopard attacks went up from 91 in 2022-23 to 133 in 2023-24.

Another set of data accessed by DH (see table) shows cattle kill numbers nearly tripling from 108 in 2021-22 to 306 in 2025-25.

"Calves and sheep are killed in most incidents. They have become easy prey for leopards. Cattle kill does get compensation, but no farmer is happy with it. What we have seen is growing animosity against wildlife, which is difficult to manage," an official said.

Common lands exploited

The common lands, once used by animals as buffer, have been devastated by quarries and soil extraction. A substantial extent of gomala lands were already under encroachment by 2019. The growing real estate in Bengaluru means encroachment has only increased.

In fact, Nov 2025 saw Anekal police registering FIRs against 16 persons, including government employees, for changing entries in revenue records in an attempt to help landgrabbers.

ESHWAR KHANDRE
Forest, Ecology and Environment Minister

"The department will hold a meeting with all stakeholders. We will place all recommendations of the CEC report before them and form a consolidated opinion. We will also get legal opinion and place findings before the government for further action.

As per the complaint filed by Anekal tahsildar (grade 2), revenue documents between 1940-41 and 1952-53 were "changed/destroyed" in an attempt to help land grabbers. Gomalas and forest lands are victims in such attempts.

'Restoring ESZ necessary'

The CEC report recommends withdrawing of final ESZ notification and restoration of entire 268.96 sq km of ESZ as proposed in draft notification.

This is likely to raise concerns among many stakeholders who will be affected by such a measure.

However, environmentalist Kiran Urs, who has been working with like-minded people to save ESZ, said the 4.5-km buffer recommended in draft ESZ was not an arbitrary number, but a scientific reality backed by hard data.

"Since the reduction of ESZ, more than 20 resorts have come and 12 housing layouts, including one by KHB, have come up. Even now, many open lands are fast turning into layouts. The government has to restore entire ESZ. The monitoring committee should enforce 'polluters pay' principle to recover cost of restoration," he said.

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ALL THAT PIECE AND PARCEL of the vacant, immovable, residential property bearing Site No.727, in the layout formed by the Bengaluru Development Authority (BDA), situated at 3rd Block, Banashankari 6th Stage, Bengaluru, measuring **East to West:** 12-00 Meters and **North to South:** 18-00 Meters, totally measuring 216-00 Square Meters, assigned with BDA Property ID No.3320031858 and bounded on:
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Place : Bengaluru
Date: 06.02.2026
Komal Kumar.S Advocate
BSPS Associates
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Race course road, Bengaluru-01
Ph: 9535385766
Email- vskklaw@gmail.com

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PERSONAL

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I ROJA K.R. #208, Sulibele, Maruthinagara, Hosakote Taluk, Bengaluru- 562129, have changed my name to ROJA vide affidavit dated 05/02/2026.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, Laxmi Kashinath Jangavali, residing at No. B4/1301, Elita Promenade, JP Nagar, 7th Phase, Bengaluru-560078, have changed my name to **LAXMI BAI** vide affidavit dated 05-02-2026 before notary Mamatha N.K., Bengaluru. Henceforth I shall be called **LAXMI BAI** only

I, RANGANATH GUNDERI DHANANJAYA, S/o. Dhananjaya Gunderi Murugendrappa, Residing at No. 412, 6th 'B' Main 2nd Block, Kalyan Nagar, Bangalore- 560043, have changed my name to RANGANATH GOULDING vide affidavit dated 05/02/2026, before notary K. Venkateshan, Bangalore.

I, MEHRUNIISA MOHAMED RAFEE W/o.Mohamed Rafee. R/a.Ward.#18 Kannurahalli Road, Opp.Tractor Showroom 2nd`Cross Manjushree Layout,Hoskote Bangalore Rural 562114.Have Changed my`Name to MEHR UNIISA vide`affidavit dated:4.2.2026 before`Notary H.M.Govindaraju Hosakote.

CHANGE OF NAME
I, ANANTHA S/o. Puttaiah, Residing at No. 41, 7th Cross, SVG Nagar, Moodalapalya, Bangalore- 560072 have changed my Minor Daughter's Name from **BHUVISHA. A.** to **BHUVISHA BHEEMA PUTHRI A** (DOB: 03.09.2025) vide affidavit Dated: 05.02.2026 before Notary Deepa. M. Bengaluru.

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I, **Tafazul Naveed,** Residing at No.11132,Tower 1, Prestige Falcon City. Opp. to K.P Main Road, Doddakalasandra- 560062, have lost my **Original General Power Attorney (GPA), Document Identification No.: 1900 / 98-99.** while in transit near home. If found please **Contact No: 9844081980.**

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India: Energy security of 1.4 bn people top priority

Assertion after US claim on Russian oil purchases

NEW DELHI, PTI

CRUDE CHAOS

- The MEA says diversifying energy sourcing core of India's strategy on energy procurement
- Ensuring the energy security of 1.4 billion Indians is the supreme priority of the government
- Move comes after Trump declared India will stop buying Russian oil
- India open to exploring any new supply options, including Venezuela
- Says Venezuela is India's long-standing partner in energy sector

India on Thursday said ensuring the energy security for its 1.4 billion people will be the supreme priority in deciding its strategy for energy sourcing, including exploring the option of crude oil purchases from Venezuela.

The assertion came days after US President Donald Trump claimed that New Delhi has "agreed to stop buying Russian oil and to buy much more from the United States and, potentially, Venezuela."

Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said diversifying energy sourcing, in keeping with market conditions and evolving global dynamics, is at the core of India's strategy on energy procurement.

Following a phone conversation with Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Monday, Trump, besides announcing a trade deal between the two countries, said India had agreed to stop buying Russian oil and would buy more from the US and Venezuela.

"Insofar as India's energy sourcing is concerned, the government has stated publicly on several occasions that ensuring the energy security of 1.4 billion Indians is the supreme priority of the government," Jaiswal said at his weekly media briefing.

He was responding to a volley of questions on whether India would stop procuring crude oil from Russia, as claimed by Trump.

"Diversifying our energy sourcing, in keeping with objective market conditions and evolving international dynamics, is at the core of our strategy to ensure this. All of India's actions are taken and will be taken with this in mind," Jaiswal said, without elaborating.

The MEA spokesperson said India remains open to exploring the commercial merits of any new crude supply options, including from Venezuela. It is learnt that India is unlikely to completely stop buying Russian oil.

Diplomatic sources have indicated that the Russia-Ukraine war is likely to come to an end soon, and in such a scenario, there will be no hurdles in New Delhi's energy ties with Moscow.

To a question on buying crude oil from Venezuela, Jaiswal said the country has been a long-standing partner of India in the energy sector.

"Venezuela has been a long-standing partner of India in the energy sector, encompassing trade and investments. The country was among India's major sources of crude oil until the financial year 2019-20, which was discontinued following sanctions," he said.

"Consistent with India's approach to energy security, India remains open to exploring the commercial merits of any new crude supply options, including from Venezuela," he said.

CBI closes 2003 fake encounter case, names IB officer

No chargesheet in Sadiq Jamal case as govt denies sanction

SATISH JHA
AHMEDABAD, DHNS

'STAGE-MANAGED'

- IB officer, two Mumbai cops named in CBI closure report
- 'Stage-managed encounter' case shut after two decades
- Agency finds conspiracy, says IB input 'fabricated'
- Encounter specialist Pradeep Sharma named in report

The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has officially closed the 2003 Sadiq Jamal Mehtar encounter case, concluding that three more people — an Intelligence Bureau (IB) officer and two Mumbai policemen — were also involved in the alleged crime. However, the agency stated that it closed the case after failing to secure government approval to file a chargesheet against them.

The closure report, a copy of which is with *DH*, names three officials: Gururaj Savadatti, then Assistant Central Intelligence Officer (ACIO) of the Subsidiary Intelligence Bureau (SIB), Mumbai, along with two former Mumbai police officers—the controversial "encounter specialist" Pradeep Sharma and Feroze Patel. The CBI found their alleged involvement in conspiracy, illegal confinement and kidnapping.

Branded LeT operative

Nineteen-year-old Sadiq was killed on the outskirts of Ahmedabad in an encounter carried out by a team of Ahmedabad Crime Branch officials. Based on an IB input, Sadiq was branded a Lashkar-e-Taiba operative allegedly plotting to assassinate then chief minister Narendra Modi, former VHP leader Pravin Togadia and other saffron leaders to avenge the 2002 post-Godhra riots.

The probe agency stated that it closed the case after the Ministry of Home Affairs (for IB officer Savadatti) and the Maharashtra government (for Sharma and Patel) did not grant sanction to prosecute them. Under Section 197 of the CrPC, prior sanction is required in the case of government servants.

The CBI also stated that the Maharashtra government did not grant the sanction it sought against Sharma and Patel.

The CBI filed the closure report on February 14, 2024, before the special CBI court in Ahmedabad. A copy was handed over to Sadiq's brother Shabbir only on Saturday (January 31). The court directed the CBI to provide him the report and asked whether he wished to file any objection or accept it. Shabbir sought time, which was granted until March 9. Speaking to *DH* about the closure report, he said, "I plan to file an objection application, as someone was responsible for the murder of my brother."

Cold-blooded murder

In December 2012, the CBI filed its first chargesheet against Gujarat policemen for conspiracy, illegal confinement and the cold-blooded murder of Sadiq. The investigation had revealed it was a stage-managed encounter, and a total of eight policemen were chargesheeted. All of them were later discharged by the courts, largely on the ground that the state government had not granted the CBI sanction to prosecute them.

The CBI did not challenge any of these orders in the high court. The agency took a similar stand in other cases, such as the Ishrat Jahan encounter case.

The closure report stated that then ACIO Gururaj Savadatti of SIB, Mumbai, fabricated an intelligence input portraying Sadiq as a terrorist recruited in Dubai by Pakistan-based gangsters Salim Chiplun and Anis Ibrahim, with a target list from ISI and LeT. The CBI alleged Savadatti "stage-managed" Sadiq's arrest by Mumbai Police's Crime Intelligence Unit in Andheri, which later handed him over to Gujarat police days before the encounter.

'Legally enforceable': SC orders Bengal govt to pay DA arrears to employees

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

'Idea of welfare state casts duty on govt to ensure citizens' well-being'

Observing that the idea of a welfare state casts a duty upon the government to ensure the social and economic well-being of its citizens, the Supreme Court on Thursday said that the role of the State is not limited to maintaining law and order, but extends to improving living standards for individuals, reports PTI.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Prashant Kumar Mishra said one of the most persistent threats to this objective that has become a permanent "bad penny" is inflation, which steadily erodes purchasing power.

"The idea of a welfare state casts a positive duty upon the State to ensure the social and economic well-being of its citizens. The role of the State is as such not limited to maintaining law and order or facilitating markets, but extends to creating or easing the way for conditions in which individuals can live with security, dignity, and a reasonable standard of living," the bench said.

The Supreme Court on Thursday ruled that dearness allowance (DA) is a legally enforceable right, not an additional benefit, but a means to ensure a minimum standard of living. It directed the West Bengal government to pay the allowance to its employees for the period from 2008 to 2019.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and Prashant Kumar Mishra held that all state employees who retired during the pendency of the litigation would also be entitled to the benefits. The court directed the government to file a status report after payment of the first instalment and fixed April 15 for the next hearing on compliance.

The order came on an appeal filed by the West Bengal government against the Calcutta High Court's May 2022 ruling, which had favoured the employees and directed the state to align its DA with central rates. As of April 2025, while central government employees received 55% DA, their West Bengal counterparts got only 18%, despite a recent 4% hike.

The bench directed the West Bengal government to pay 25% of the outstanding DA to its employees by March 6.

The court said that dearness allowance has emerged as a practical instrument of protection in the hands of the welfare state, stressing that it safeguards employees from the adverse effects of rising prices.

The SC also constituted a committee comprising former apex court judge Justice Indu Malhotra, former High Court Chief Justice/ Judge Tarlok Singh Chauhan, Justice Goutam Bhaduri, and the Comptroller and Auditor General of India or the seniormost officer nominated from his establishment. The committee, in consultation with state authorities, must determine the total amount to be paid, fix the schedule of payments, and verify the release of funds.

The total outstanding DA dues are estimated to be around Rs 41,000 crore.

"At its core, DA is not intended to provide complete neutralisation of price rise for all employees, except in the case of the lowest paid categories. Its purpose is to offer partial compensation for increased living costs through a variable and flexible mechanism, usually linked to a cost-of-living index," Justice Karol wrote for the bench.

The court added that the state cannot shirk its responsibility to pay DA on the grounds of financial difficulty.

CHILL THRILL

Children slide downhill on sledges after snowfall at Gawran village, in Anantnag district, J&K, on Thursday. PTI

Ghaziabad triple suicide: Korean obsession figures in diary

GHAZIABAD (UP), PTI: A nine-page pocket diary recovered from the room of three minor sisters, who died by suicide in Ghaziabad has offered a glimpse into their inner world, marked by an intense attachment to the Korean culture and anguish over family strife, police said on Thursday.

The police said that the initial investigations haven't revealed the use of any Korean task-based app by the girls.

The police also said if the use of any such task-based Korean app is confirmed, they will write to the department concerned seeking a ban on such apps.

After the sisters - Nishika, Prachi and Pakhi - jumped to death from the ninth floor, their father Chetan Kumar claimed they had been playing a Korean game for close to three years and had not attended school since then.

The last rituals were performed by their father Chetan. "It is not known why the girls were cremated on the night of Wednesday. It may be due to their personal reasons," the ACP said.

According to the police, the diary contains repeated references to the girls' love for Korea and what they described as attempts by the family to make them give it up.

"We love Korean. Love, love, love," the diary states, calling itself a "true life story" and urging readers to believe what is written in it.

The note alleges that their parents were opposed to their interests and future choices, including marriage. It also mentions physical punishment and ends with an apology addressed to their father.

Relief to homebuyers: SC orders NBCC to complete stalled projects

NEW DELHI, DHNS: In a relief to harried homebuyers, the Supreme Court on Thursday upheld an order passed by the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT) by directing the state-owned National Buildings Construction Corporation (NBCC) to expeditiously complete debt-ridden realty firm Supertech Limited's 16 housing projects.

The top court used its extraordinary power under Article 142 of the Constitution to uphold the NCLAT's December 12, 2024, order asking the NBCC to take over the projects in the interest of the homebuyers waiting for the delivery of their dream homes for more than a decade.

A bench of Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi said it found the NCLAT order "neither unfair nor contrary to the provisions of the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC)".

The court made it clear that houses must contain all the assured facilities.

The court also restrained all tribunals and high courts from passing any order that might lead to the stalling of the construction work to be completed by NBCC.

'Constant pressure on eastern border with China'

SUJAY B M
SHILLONG, DHNS

Air Marshal Inderpal Singh Walia

There was constant pressure on India's eastern border with China, even though most of the action happened along the western frontier, a senior Indian Air Force (IAF) official said on Thursday.

Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief (Eastern Air Command) Air Marshal Inderpal Singh Walia and a few other senior personnel interacted with a delegation of journalists from Karnataka who are touring Meghalaya.

During the interaction, a senior officer explained the nuances of border disputes: "There are regions we think are ours. There are regions they think are theirs. There are also regions which they think we think are (consider) ours."

Responding to a question about the geographic and other differences between the eastern and western parts of the India-China border, the official explained that the eastern part in Arunachal Pradesh had a hilly terrain, where it was harder to move tankers, while the terrain in Ladakh was flat.

When the infantry (foot soldiers) navigated through hilly terrains, support from the IAF was deemed crucial.

He noted that the entire India-China border came under the Western Theatre Command in the Chinese army (in India, it comes under Northern, Central, and Eastern Army Commands), providing China with a single-window command.

"There are many points of dispute along the border, and it's impossible to start a battle at all these places. The Chinese army (People's Liberation Army) may target a particular point," said the official.

Earlier, another officer explained that the Chinese had a flatter plateau on their side of the eastern border, unlike the Indian border in Arunachal Pradesh. "However, the terrain gets hilly around the border even for them in places where clashes are likely," said the official.

The senior officer felt the coverage of wars by the Indian media was "better than many countries", adding: "Most of the news broadcast and covered by the Indian media during Operation Sindoor was accurate."

Tirumala ghee row: 1-man panel to review CBI probe report

HYDERABAD, DHNS: Leaders of the NDA and its coalition partners in Andhra Pradesh, with Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu and Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on the forefront, said the alleged adulteration of Tirumala laddu prasadam was a grave offence against devotees' faith, and asserted that no report had given a clean chit to the YSRCP in the matter.

As the CBI special investigation team's final chargesheet in the matter sparked a political storm in Andhra Pradesh, Naidu, Pawan Kalyan, state BJP chief P V N Madhav and other Cabinet ministers, including IT Minister Nara Lokesh, held a closed-door meeting on Thursday to discuss the way ahead.

Naidu told reporters after the meeting that the CBI had submitted a report directing the government to initiate administrative action against certain individuals.

The CM further said that, based on the CBI's communication, the government had constituted a one-man committee to conduct a comprehensive examination of the report, identify lapses, and affix responsibility.

He said once the committee completed its review, the government would initiate appropriate action in accordance with the findings.

"Lord Sri Venkateswara Swamy is the family deity of my household," he said, alleging that adulteration of his prasadam took place during the previous YSRCP regime.

SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

Kochi Water Metro: From local lifeline to national model

ARJUN RAGHUNATH
THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS

The Kochi Water Metro (KWM) of Kerala has emerged as a cost-effective and eco-friendly urban transport model, now being replicated in 21 places across the country.

Feasibility studies have already been completed in 10 cities across Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Assam, Gujarat and J&K, while work is underway in 10 more. KWM has also won the tender to prepare the detailed project report (DPR) for a water metro service in Mumbai.

Praised in the Centre's latest Economic Survey as a model of efficient urban infrastructure, KWM addresses the travel woes of residents of 10 islands around Kochi, including Vypeen, Mattancherry and Bolgatty.

Since its launch in April 2023, the Kochi Water Metro has been operating around 125 trips daily, catering to over 6,000 passengers. Cutting travel time from about an hour by road to just 20 minutes by water — at almost half the cost — and reducing carbon emissions through the use of 100-seat electric-hybrid boats are among its key highlights. The service is integrated with Kochi Metro Rail Limited (KMRL).

Minimising land acquisition also makes the water metro an attractive option for urban transportation, according to the Economic Survey.

"In a short span of time, the water metro has drawn national and international attention as a replicable model for modern urban water transport, which also enhances the quality of life of the people," KMRL-KWM managing director Loknath Behera told *DH*.

The Kochi Water Metro recently received an honourable mention from the New York-based Institute for Transportation and Development Policy in its sustainable transport awards.

Winning the tender to prepare the detailed project report for a water metro in Mumbai is seen as a major milestone for KMRL-KWM. "We are aiming to complete the report soon so that the Maharashtra government can begin work this year itself," said Behera, who is also the former Kerala state police chief.

Meanwhile, the Kochi Water Metro is expanding further by setting up new terminals and launching services to Kochi International Airport from nearby Aluva town. The expansion plans also include the introduction of hydrogen-powered boats.

SC directs UPSC to flag states delaying DGP appointments

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Thursday disapproved of the practice of appointing acting DGPs and told state governments not to delay sending proposals to the Union Public Service Commission for the appointment of police chiefs.

A bench of the Chief Justice of India, Surya Kant, and Justice Joymalya Bagchi authorised the UPSC to send reminders to the States to submit proposals for DGP appointments. If there is a default by the States, the UPSC will be at liberty to initiate contempt proceedings, the court said.

"In order to ensure that there is no defiance of the directions issued in the Prakash Singh case, we hereby authorise the UPSC to firstly write to the state governments to send a timely proposal for appointment of DGP," the bench said.

The court was hearing a petition filed by the UPSC challenging a January 9 order of the Telangana High Court. Having noted the delay by some states in appointing DGPs, the court authorised the UPSC to flag non-compliance and directed it to act swiftly in the case of Telangana, where the post of regular DGP has remained vacant since 2017.

The court granted the UPSC four weeks to convene a meeting and make the necessary recommendations for the appointment of the DGP for Telangana, highlighting that the prolonged inaction ran contrary to its own earlier directions on police reforms.

UPSC makes face authentication of aspirants mandatory

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has made face authentication mandatory for all aspirants at examination centres, and introduced strict eligibility restrictions for candidates already appointed to certain services.

The changes were announced on Thursday in an official notification for the Civil Services Examination (CSE) 2026.

The commission announced 933 vacancies for this year, including 33 posts reserved for persons with benchmark disability.

The preliminary examination will be held on May 24, it said.

The UPSC conducts the prestigious annual exam in three stages — preliminary, main, and interview — to select officers to the Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Foreign Service (IFS), and Indian Police Service (IPS), among others.

Lok Sabha passes Motion of Thanks without PM's reply

Speaker 'advised' Modi not to attend LS amid protest fears

NEW DELHI, DHNS

'CONCRETE' INFO

- Speaker Birla cites 'concrete information' of possible Cong disruption
- Four Cong women MPs positioned at PM's seat during proceedings
- Oppn says PM 'hiding behind Speaker', lacked courage to face House
- Rahul's speech row keeps Lok Sabha in stalemate

Congress MP Jairam Ramesh with lawmakers, who were suspended from the Lok Sabha on Tuesday for the remainder of the Budget session for "unruly behaviour", stage a protest with a poster "PM is compromised", at Parliament premises in New Delhi, on Thursday. PTI

The Lok Sabha on Thursday passed the Motion of Thanks on the President's address without the Prime Minister's reply to the debate, with Speaker Om Birla saying that he had asked PM Narendra Modi not to attend the House as he had "concrete information" that Congress MPs would stage "unforeseen" protests that could lead to "unfortunate incidents".

Senior Congress MP Priyanka Gandhi Vadra hit back, telling reporters that the prime minister was "hiding behind" the Speaker as he "did not have the guts" to face the House. The Opposition had made it clear that they would "not allow" Modi's address if Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi was not permitted to conclude his speech in the Lok Sabha.

In June 2004, then prime minister Manmohan Singh was unable to reply to the debate on the Motion of Thanks in both the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha following Opposition protests. Singh was present in the House and urged that voting on the motion proceed without his speech.

Since Monday, the Lok Sabha has been in stalemate after Rahul was disallowed from continuing his speech, during which he sought to refer to unflattering comments made by Gen MM Naravane in his unreleased memoirs about PM Modi and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's handling of the conflict with China.

At 12 pm, when the House reassembled after an adjournment during Question Hour, Birla took up the Motion of Thanks even as Modi, Home Minister Amit Shah, and Rajnath were not present.

With several Opposition MPs in the Well of the House, the Speaker first put the amendments submitted by the Opposition to vote and then the motion. Both were negated by a voice vote, after which the House was adjourned till 2 pm. At 2 pm, similar scenes unfolded, and BJP MP Sandhya Ray, who was in the Chair, adjourned proceedings till 3 pm.

Birla returned to the House at 3 pm and referred to the absence of Modi and his decision not to reply to the debate, saying, "When the prime minister was to respond to the Motion on the President's Address, I had concrete information that Congress MPs could indulge in unforeseen acts. Had any incident taken place, it would have been unfortunate."

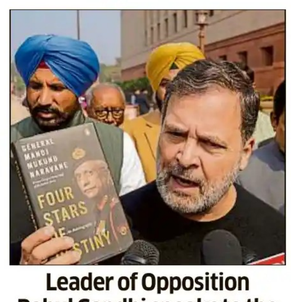
"It is not appropriate if the Leader of the House does not speak in the Lok Sabha. To avert any incident, I requested the prime minister not to come to the House. I am thankful to him that he accepted my request," Birla said.

At least four Congress women MPs had positioned themselves in front of the seat assigned to Modi, who was not present at that time, after proceedings began at 5 pm.

Referring to Congress MPs entering his office to complain about BJP MP Nishikant Dubey's remarks against Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi, citing books, Birla said he did not find the behaviour of some Congress MPs acceptable.

Naravane episode is perfect backdrop for Oppn reunion

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS



Leader of Opposition Rahul Gandhi speaks to the media during the Budget Session of Parliament. PTI

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi's attack on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Union government's subsequent insistence on not allowing him to refer to retired Gen M M Naravane's unreleased memoir have provided a perfect backdrop for a divided Opposition to come together, with just a couple of months left for the latest round of Assembly elections.

With its strained relations with the DMK, Samajwadi Party (SP), and the Trinamool Congress impacting Opposition unity in the recent past, the Congress managed to pressure the ruling BJP in Parliament as the regional parties threw their full weight behind it, sending a united message that Modi could not speak in the Lok Sabha unless Rahul were allowed to speak.

The Opposition will utilise the opportunity to further dent the BJP narrative by claiming that Modi "ran away" from the debate after the PM missed his date with the Lok Sabha but spoke to a half-empty Rajya Sabha after an Opposition walkout.

The latest episode comes barely two months after the ruling BJP pushed through the VB-G RAM G Bill, confident it had mastered the narrative. The Opposition was on the backfoot after the devastating Bihar Assembly polls, followed by speculation about Sharad Pawar's NCP (SP) switching sides.

However, Rahul's insistence on sticking to raising Gen Naravane's remarks on Modi's handling of the China conflict worked, despite some party colleagues arguing that he would have done better if he moved with support from leaders like the SP's Akhilesh Yadav and the TMC's Abhishek Banerjee.

If the BJP did not want Rahul's attack on Modi to go into the Parliamentary records, Rahul ensured that he controlled the optics. He displayed a copy of the memoirs inside and outside, saying: "The main line is what the PM said, 'Jo uchit samjho woh karo (Do what you feel is right)'... Gen Naravane called Rajnath Singh and said 'Chinese tanks have come on Kailash ridge, what should we do?' Rajnath did not reply to him at first... Modi gave the message... Meaning he shed responsibility."

The Congress and its allies feel that the government is on the backfoot on the Budget and the Indo-US trade deal, and Rahul's pushback helped the Opposition helped them create the narrative of a "weakened" PM.

BJP's Kuki MLAs face 'social boycott' for joining Manipur government

Protesters clash with security forces, vandalise property

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

Manipur Chief Minister Yumnam Khemchand Singh (centre) during the seventh session of the 12th Manipur Legislative Assembly, in Imphal, on Thursday. PTI

A day after a "popular government" was reinstated in strife-torn Manipur, violence erupted in the Kuki-dominated Churachandpur district during a "shutdown" call by Kuki organisations, who also demanded a "social boycott" of five Kuki MLAs from the BJP who joined the government.

Videos shared by Kuki organisations on Thursday evening showed protesters pelting stones, burning tyres, and even vandalising properties in the Tuibuong area.

They said that protesters clashed after the security forces tried to stop them from enforcing the "shutdown".

Kuki-Zo organisations roared in protest after Nemcha Kipgen, a Kuki woman MLA, took oath virtually as the deputy chief minister.

Yumnam Khemchand Singh, a Meitei MLA, was administered the oath as the new CM, while Naga legislator Losii Dikho took an oath as the other deputy CM.

A Kuki-community group protested in front of the Manipur Bhawan in New Delhi on Thursday night, from where Kipgen took oath.

Many in Kuki-dominated areas took to the streets while an organisation of "village volunteers" — armed Kukis — announced a "cash reward" of Rs 20 lakh for killing Kigen and Rs 10 lakh each against two Hmar-Zomi MLAs who attended the swearing-in ceremony in Meitei-dominated Imphal.

By inducting a Kuki and a Naga as deputy CMs, the BJP was planning to reach out to the communities for the restoration of peace in a state roiled by the Meitei-Kuki conflict since May 2023. However, Thursday's violence emerged as a worry for the government.

Betrayal charge

Meanwhile, the Kuki-Zo Council (KZC), an apex body of Kuki organisations engaged in talks with the government, issued a "social boycott" against five of Manipur's seven Kuki MLAs in the BJP.

In a statement, the council said that by joining the government, the MLAs had violated the January 13 resolution in Assam's Guwahati, which was endorsed by the MLAs, the KZC, and the armed groups in the Suspension of Operations agreement.

It was resolved not to participate in the formation of the government in the absence of a written political commitment from both the Central and state governments for a negotiated political settlement — a Union Territory with a Legislature — under the Constitution.

"By joining the formation of a Meitei-dominated government, these MLAs have effectively aligned themselves with our enemy (the Meiteis), thereby betraying their own people and disregarding the immense pain and sacrifices endured by the Kuki-Zo community," said the KZC.

The Kuki Students' Organisation and a few others endorsed the "social boycott" call and the shutdown.

Achuthanandan's family unlikely to accept Padma award

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: The family of late CPM leader VS Achuthanandan is unlikely to accept the Padma Vibhushan award conferred on him.

In a social media post, the former chief minister's son Arun Kumar said the family would respect the ideologies of the party he represented.

CPM general secretary MA Baby recently said that Achuthanandan would have declined the Padma award if he were alive.

Communist leaders EMS Namboodiripad and Jyoti Basu had earlier rejected the Padma awards, saying they were against party ideologies.

Arun Kumar on Thursday said, "The political party that my father represented has a clear stand on such official honours. As a Communist, my father always firmly upheld those ideologies. Hence, the party will also stand by them."

The family believed the place Achuthanandan holds in the hearts of the people was greater than any award.

Cong shuts out CPM in Bengal, to fight Assembly polls alone

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Congress on Thursday snubbed the CPM for an electoral understanding in West Bengal, deciding to contest all 294 seats in the upcoming Assembly polls, insisting its previous tie-up with the Left party "demoralised" its cadre.

The decision, which came three weeks after the CPM Central Committee signalled that it was open to an electoral understanding with the Congress "to defeat" the Trinamool Congress (TMC) and the BJP in West Bengal, was made at a meeting chaired by Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge.

Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi, Congress general secretary (organisation) K C Venugopal, Bengal in-charge Ghulam Ahmed Mir, Bengal Congress president Subhankar Sarkar, and senior leaders Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury, Isha Khan Choudhury, and Mausam Noor were among those who attended the meeting.

While the old guard, including Adhir and Pradip Bhattacharya, favoured a tie-up with the Left party, the younger leaders opposed it as they felt it would rob the party of electoral opportunities and not help the party organisationally.

After the meeting, Mir told reporters, "After discussions with everyone, it has been decided that the Congress will contest all 294 seats independently in West Bengal. We will make preparations keeping this in mind. Forming an alliance in the state in the past had demoralised Congress workers at the grassroots level."

West Bengal Congress Political Affairs Committee member Ranajit Banerjee told *DH*, "The decision makes all Congress cadre, supporters, and the entire ecosystem positively active towards working for the elections... It is an investment for the future. It will help people believe in us, and we will be able to deliver a government that people deserve."

INDIGENOUSLY DEVELOPED

Five Tejas fighter jets ready for delivery to IAF: HAL

KALYAN RAY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Aviation major Hindustan Aeronautics Limited on Thursday said five Tejas LCA Mk1A are "fully ready" and the company is talking to the Indian Air Force to determine the delivery schedule.

Nine additional aircraft that have been built and flown are awaiting the supply of engines from the US major General Electric, that have delivered five engines so far.

The update from the HAL comes at a time when the IAF, dismayed by the delay on the part of HAL in supplying the jets, plans a review of the combat readiness of the aircraft before deciding on the delivery schedule.

"HAL confirms that five aircraft are fully ready for delivery, incorporating major contracted capabilities in accordance with the agreed specifications," the company said in a statement.

"An additional nine aircraft have already been built and flown. Upon receipt of engines from GE, these aircraft will be made ready for delivery."

In 2021, HAL signed a contract with GE for 99 F404 engines to manufacture 83 LCA-Mk1A.

Subsequently, in November 2025, it signed another agreement with GE for the supply of 113 additional engines to power another 97 Tejas aircraft contracted by the Defence Ministry.

After a delay of nearly two years, GE began to supply the engines for the first contract from last year.

The IAF, however, was not satisfied with progress in completing the aircraft even after receiving the engines.

The pending issues include getting all the certifications done and glitch-free firing of Astra beyond visual range missiles. In the last firing, the weapon faced software complications.

In its statement, HAL said all design and development issues identified were being addressed in an expedited manner, and it is in active discussions with the IAF to deliver the aircraft at the earliest.

Five engines received

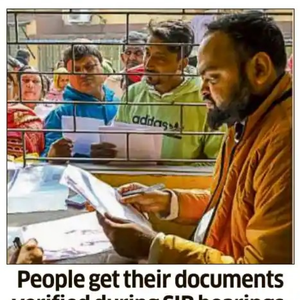
"HAL has received five engines from GE as of this date. The supply position from GE is positive, and the future delivery outlook aligns with HAL's delivery plans," it adds.

The uncertainty on the delivery of LCA Mk1A comes at a time when the IAF lives with a depleting squadron number as the force currently operates only 29 squadrons - its lowest strength in decades.

The state-owned company that has been enjoying a virtual monopoly in aircraft manufacturing for decades has reportedly been left out of India's quest to indigenously produce fifth-generation advanced medium combat aircraft.

Bengal SIR marred by incidents of violence, obstruction: EC to SC

NEW DELHI, PTI



People get their documents verified during SIR hearings, in Nadia, on Thursday. PTI

The Election Commission has told the Supreme Court that the enumeration phase of the special intensive revision of electoral rolls in West Bengal saw several incidents of violence, intimidation and obstruction against election officials.

In its affidavit, the poll panel claimed that these incidents were opposed to the enumeration phase in other states, which proceeded "seamlessly and without incident".

It said that the 2025 electoral rolls cannot be used for the upcoming assembly polls as over 58 lakh absent, dead and shifted voters had been identified during its SIR and that around 1.51 crore notices were being issued by electoral registration officers.

According to the affidavit, there was a "pervasive reluctance" by local police authorities to register cases on complaints made by BLOs, and that some FIRs were registered only after the intervention of district election officers.

It said that the state willfully neglected to comply with EC directions on registration of FIRs and disciplinary action.

Regarding the gherao of the Chief Electoral Officer's Kolkata office on November 24, the affidavit said that protestors attempted forcible entry, vandalised the office, obstructed officials, locked the premises and prevented officers from entering and leaving, all of which seriously hindered official work. It said that despite the EC's letter to Kolkata's police commissioner regarding the breach, the protestors remained encamped in the premises for around 28 hours, and that no case was registered.

It underlined that following a threat assessment by the Union Home Ministry, the CEO of West Bengal was granted 'Y' category security and that he was the only electoral official to have such security.

Tejashwi claims NDA spent Rs 40k cr to sway Bihar polls

ABHAY KUMAR
PATNA

Tejashwi Yadav

CRYING FOUL

- RJD leader slams Nitish regime over Rs 10,000 dole to women during polls
- Vows comeback after poll defeat, says 'our time will come'
- Prashant Kishor alleges model code violation, seeks fresh polls
- SC to hear Kishor's plea on February 6

Breaking his silence after the crushing defeat in the November 2025 Assembly polls, former Bihar deputy chief minister and Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav on Thursday alleged that the NDA spent Rs 40,000 crore to defeat the Mahagathbandhan.

Meanwhile, poll strategist-turned-politician and Jan Suraaj founder Prashant Kishor has moved the Supreme Court, challenging the Bihar election and seeking fresh polls.

Speaking during the debate on the motion of thanks to the governor's reply, Tejashwi accused the Nitish Kumar government of using sops worth Rs 40,000 crore in the run-up to the elections. He singled out the Rs 10,000 dole given to each of the 1.4 crore women, even after the model code of conduct had come into force.

"In Lok-tantra (democracy), Lok haara, tantra jeeta — people were defeated, while the machinery won. You reduced Lok-tantra to darr-tantra (rule of fear)," he said.

"Today you may have come to power, but a time will come when we will also govern," said Tejashwi, even as Bihar Deputy CM and senior BJP leader Vijay Sinha sought to deride him by invoking the slogan 'Chara chor' (a reference to the conviction of Lalu Prasad in fodder scam).

Kishor moves SC

Jan Suraaj leader Prashant Kishor's petition seeking fresh polls will be heard on February 6 by a Supreme Court bench comprising Chief Justice Surya Kant and Justice Joymalya Bagchi.

The NDA secured 202 seats in the Bihar elections, while the RJD-led Mahagathbandhan managed only 35 in the 243-member House. Kishor's outfit contested all seats but failed to win any.

The petition alleges that the Bihar government violated the model code of conduct by transferring Rs 10,000 each to over one crore women under the Mukhyamantri Mahila Rojgar Yojna, calling it an inducement that tilted polls in NDA's favour.

The petition has sought directions to the poll panel to take action under Article 324 of Constitution (superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of electoral rolls for, and the conduct of, all elections) and Section 123 of the Representation of People Act against direct transfer of money to women voters.

POLARISED POLITICS

Bangladesh's Hindu minority in fear as attacks rise and election nears

Brutal killing highlights growing insecurity for minorities

DHAKA, AP/PTI

Dipu Chandra Das, a 27-year-old Hindu garment worker, was accused in December by several Muslim colleagues of making derogatory remarks about the Prophet Muhammad. The accusations drew a violent mob to his workplace. He was beaten to death, his body hung from a tree and set on fire.

Across Bangladesh, Hindus watched the recorded images on their phones with dread. Protests erupted in Dhaka and other cities, with demonstrators demanding justice and greater protections. The interim government, led by Muhammad Yunus, ordered an investigation, and police said that about a dozen people were arrested.

But human rights groups and Hindu leaders say the killing wasn't an isolated act, but part of a wider surge in attacks on the minority community, fuelled by rising polarisation, the reemergence of Islamists and what they describe as a growing culture of impunity. Among Hindus, fear has grown more pervasive as the Muslim-majority nation moves toward a national election on February 12.

"No one feels safe anymore," said Ranjan Karmaker, a Dhaka-based Hindu human rights activist. "Everyone is terrified."

Hindus make up a small minority in Bangladesh, about 13.1 million people, or roughly 8 per cent of the country's population of 170 million, while Muslims make up 91 per cent.

The Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council, an umbrella group representing minority communities, says it documented more than 2,000 incidents of communal violence since the ouster of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in a mass uprising in August 2024. The group recorded at least 61 killings, 28 instances of violence against women - among them rape and gang rape - and 95 attacks on places of worship involving vandalism, looting and arson. It has also accused the Yunus-led administration of routinely dismissing or downplaying reports of such violence.

When contacted for a response, an official from Yunus' press team declined to comment. The administration headed by Yunus has consistently denied claims that it has failed to ensure adequate protection for minority communities and insisted that most incidents aren't driven by religious hostility.

Previous elections in Bangladesh have also seen increases in violence, with religious minorities often bearing the brunt. But with Hasina's Awami League party barred from contesting elections and with her living in exile in India, many Hindus fear the worst as they have long been viewed as aligned with Hasina.

WORLD AT A GLANCE

US federal agents with Homeland Security Investigations detain a protestor wearing an "Antifa" shirt outside a residential building in Minneapolis, on Thursday. AFP

CIA ends publication of its popular World Factbook

▶ Close the cover on the CIA World Factbook: The spy agency announced on Wednesday that after more than 60 years, it is shuttering the popular reference manual, AP/PTI reports from Washington.

The announcement posted to the CIA's website offered no reason for the decision to end the Factbook, but it follows a vow from Director John Ratcliffe to end programmes that don't advance the agency's core missions. First launched in 1962 as a printed, classified reference manual for intelligence officers, the Factbook offered a detailed, by-the-numbers picture of foreign nations, their economies, militaries, resources and societies. The Factbook proved so useful that other federal agencies began using it, and within a decade, an unclassified version was released to the public. After going online in 1997, the Factbook became a popular reference site for journalists, trivia aficionados and the writers of college essays, racking up millions of visits per year. The White House has moved to cut staffing at the CIA and the National Security Agency early in Trump's second term, forcing the agency to do more with less.

Famine spreads in Sudan's Darfur

▶ Famine is spreading in war-torn Sudan's western Darfur region and has now engulfed two more towns there, a global hunger monitoring group said Thursday, AP/PTI reports from Cairo.

The announcement came after the group said last year that people in Darfur's major city of el-Fasher, overrun by the paramilitary forces after an 18-month siege, were enduring famine. Since April 2023, war has gripped much of Sudan after a power struggle erupted between the East African country's military and the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. The conflict has triggered what the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Still ready for nuclear talks with US: Russia

Trump says he wants a better treaty that includes China

MOSCOW, REUTERS

Russia said on Thursday it regretted the expiry of its last remaining nuclear arms treaty with the United States but remained ready to talk, raising the possibility of a last-minute deal to preserve limits on the deployment of the world's deadliest weapons.

Axios reported that negotiations had been taking place over the past 24 hours in Abu Dhabi and that the two countries were closing in on a deal to continue observing key terms of the New START treaty, which limits each side's numbers of missiles, launchers and strategic nuclear warheads.

US President Donald Trump has not formally responded to a proposal from Russian President Vladimir Putin to stick to those central provisions for one more year, even though there is no legal option to extend the full treaty. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said Russia was still ready to engage in dialogue if Washington responded constructively to Putin's proposal. "Listen, if there are any constructive replies, of course we will conduct a dialogue," Peskov told reporters.

New START was the last in a series of nuclear agreements between Moscow and Washington dating back more than half a century to the Cold War. Besides setting numerical limits on weapons, they included inspection regimes that experts say helped build a level of trust and confidence between the nuclear adversaries.

If nothing replaces the treaty, security analysts foresee a more dangerous environment with a higher risk of miscalculation. Forced to rely on worst-case assumptions about the other's intentions, the US and Russia would face incentives to increase their arsenals, particularly as China seeks to catch up through its own rapid nuclear build-up.

Trump has said he wants to replace New START with a better deal that includes China, but Beijing has declined negotiations with Moscow and Washington. China has a fraction of their warhead numbers—an estimated 600, compared with around 4,000 each for Russia and the US.

Repeating that position on Thursday, China said the expiration of the treaty was regrettable and urged the US to resume dialogue with Russia on "strategic stability".

Peskov said Russia would take a responsible approach. The White House said this week that Trump would decide the way forward on nuclear arms control, which he would "clarify on his own timeline".

Beijing rejects nuke talks

China rejected calls to enter talks on a new nuclear treaty after a US-Russian agreement expired on Thursday, ending decades of restrictions on how many warheads the two powers can deploy, AFP reports from Beijing. China's foreign ministry said Beijing "will not participate in nuclear disarmament negotiations at this stage".

VERTICAL ELECTRIC AVIATION

AutoFlight's V5000 Matrix, the world's first five-ton eVTOL (electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing) designed to carry up to 10 passengers, takes off during a public flight demonstration in Kunshan, China, on Thursday. AFP

China's Xi presses Trump on Taiwan in phone call

Lengthy call exposes sharp differences over the future of Taiwan

NYT NEWS SERVICE

US President Donald Trump and President Xi Jinping of China had a lengthy phone call on Wednesday during which, Trump said, the two leaders discussed a wide range of issues — including Iran, the war in Ukraine and soybeans — before Trump's visit to China this spring.

But the call, which Trump enthusiastically described as "excellent" and "long and thorough," included a warning from Xi about an issue that Trump has tiptoed around: the future of Taiwan.

In Trump's description of the call, posted to his Truth Social account, he listed the issue of Taiwan among more than a half-dozen topics — "all very positive"—that the two had discussed. The call lasted almost two hours. Trump said they discussed his trip to China for a high-stakes summit in April, as the two leaders have sought to ease tensions in recent months after engaging in an aggressive trade war shortly after Trump took office. The two last met in October in South Korea, where they agreed to a yearlong trade truce. The two did not discuss Taiwan during that meeting.

"The relationship with China, and my personal relationship with President Xi, is an extremely good one, and we both realize how important it is to keep it that way," Trump wrote in the social media post. "I believe that there will be many positive results achieved over the next three years of my Presidency having to do with President Xi, and the People's Republic of China!"

But a description of the call from Chinese state media was much more forceful, and suggested that the issue of Taiwan was front and center.

US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping in Busan, South Korea. REUTERS FILE

Xi-Trump call will 'stabilise' regional security: Taipei

Taiwan welcomed US President Donald Trump's call with his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping, saying it will help "stabilise" the region as China increases military pressure on the island, AFP reports from Taipei. Taiwanese Deputy Foreign Minister Chen Ming-chi made the remarks, hours after Chinese state media reported that Xi had called for "mutual respect" in strengthening ties with Washington.

Ukraine, Russia exchange POWs for first time in months

KYIV, AFP: Ukraine and Russia have conducted their first prisoner exchange in months, each releasing at least 157 people, both countries said on Thursday, amid US-brokered talks in Abu Dhabi.

The two sides have in the past conducted several rounds of prisoner swaps, one of the rare areas of direct cooperation between Ukraine and Russia amid the four-year war, but last month Kyiv accused Moscow of halting the exchanges.

On Thursday, amid three-way talks in Abu Dhabi, the countries swapped 157 captured soldiers and civilians each in an exchange mediated by Washington -- the first since October. "Today's exchange came after a long pause, and it is critical that we were able to make it happen. I thank everyone who works to make these exchanges possible," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said.

Two people ride a moped through flood waters in Sidi Kacem, Morocco, on Thursday. Over 1,40,000 people have been evacuated to safer areas. AFP

India pays $35.18 million to UN

▶ India has paid $35.18 million to the UN Regular Budget for 2026, joining the "honour roll" of 47 Member States who have paid their regular budget dues in full, PTI reports.

The UN Committee on Contributions said as of February 3, 2026, 47 states have paid their budget in full. Stéphane Dujarric, spokesperson for Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said, "This country is the home of The Statue of Unity, the world's tallest statue, with a height of 182 metres. [...] Yes, very good, India."

Iran seizes 2 foreign oil tankers in Persian Gulf

DUBAI, AP/PTI: Iran seized two foreign oil tankers in the Persian Gulf on Thursday, state television reported, claiming the vessels had been smuggling fuel.

The report did not provide the nationality of the crew or say what flag they were flying under. Gen Heidar Honarian Mojarrad, a regional commander with the Revolutionary Guard's navy, said the tankers had been carrying about 1 million litres of fuel, including diesel and were seized near Farsi island and transferred to Bushehr.

Fifteen crew members on board the two tankers are "in custody of judicial bodies," he said.

Indian teacher wins $1 mn Global Teacher Prize

DUBAI, AP/PTI

An Indian teacher and activist known for creating hundreds of learning centres and painting educational murals across the walls of slums won the $1 million Global Teacher Prize on Thursday.

Rouble Naagi accepted the award at the World Governments Summit in Dubai in the United Arab Emirates, an annual event that draws leaders from across the globe.

Her Rouble Nagi Art Foundation has established more than 800 learning centres across India. They aim to have children who never attended school begin to have structured learning. They also teach children already in school.

Nagi also paints murals that teach literacy, science, math and history, among other topics. The prize is awarded by the Varkey Foundation, whose founder, Sunny Varkey, established the for-profit GEMS Education company that runs dozens of schools in Egypt, Qatar and the UAE.

Rouble Naagi receives the award in Dubai. INSTAGRAM

Nagi plans to use the $1 million to build an institute that offers free vocational training. Nagi is the 10th teacher to win the award, which the foundation began handing out in 2015.

Past winners have included a Kenyan teacher from a remote village who gave away most of his earnings to the poor, a Palestinian teacher who teaches her students about non-violence and a Canadian educator who taught a remote Arctic village of Inuit students. Last year's winner was Saudi educator Mansour al-Mansour, who was known for his work with the poor.

Global Education Management Systems is one of the world's largest private school operators and is believed to be worth billions. Its success has followed that of Dubai, where only private schools offer classes for the children of the foreigners who power its economy.

Pak reaffirms 'support' for Kashmiri people

ISLAMABAD, PTI: Pakistan's civilian and military leadership on Thursday reaffirmed their "unwavering support" for the Kashmiri people, as rallies and demonstrations were held across the country to show solidarity with them.

"The solution to the Jammu-Kashmir dispute is to honour the wishes of the people of Kashmir and the implementation of the UNSC's resolutions," Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif told Pakistan-occupied Kashmir's (PoK) assembly in Muzaffarabad as the country observed the "Kashmir Solidarity Day". Shehbaz said that he had come to stand in solidarity with "our brothers in Kashmir on behalf of the Pakistani people and the Pakistani leadership".

OBITUARY

Mr HARISH J PADMANABHA
President of the Bangalore Club
14.11.1946 - 05.02.2026

It is with profound sorrow that the General Committee of the Bangalore Club announces the passing of Mr Harish J Padmanabha, President of the Bangalore Club, on 5 February 2026. A respected leader and integral part of the Club's legacy, he served with vision, integrity, and deep commitment to its values. He will be remembered for his warmth, graciousness, and lasting contributions to the Club and its community.

The Bangalore Club extends heartfelt condolences to his family and loved ones.
He will be deeply missed - Management, Bangalore Club

DECCAN HERALD
ESTABLISHED 1948

Trump's tariff cut brings relief, doubts

The agreement announced by United States President Donald Trump regarding the tariff arrangement between the US and India is short of a trade deal, and sheds light only on one part of the trade issues between the two countries. But it is a substantive arrangement, and has brought relief to traders, the stock market, and all others who were concerned about the disruption of India's trade ties with the US. It offers hope that the general setback in bilateral relations will be overcome. Prime Minister Narendra Modi reciprocated Trump's announcement with approval. The commerce departments of both governments have endorsed the announcement, and provided some explanations. Trump's announcement said that the US would slash tariffs on goods from India to 18% from the existing 50%. He also said that India would reduce tariffs on imports from the US to 0%.

While the general response in India is positive, the announcement has raised some questions. The talk about a 0% duty regime for imports from the US has caused serious concern in India. That would mean flooding the Indian market with US goods — including dairy and agricultural products — and this would harm India's farm sector, which is very vulnerable and sensitive. US Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins has said that the deal would improve access for US farm products to "India's massive market." Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal has said that India's farm sector would be fully protected. Modi has also made similar assurances in the past. But the statements from the US have caused concern, and organisations such as the Indian Coordination Committee of Farmers Movements (ICCFM) have reminded the government of the consequences of India giving duty-free access to US farm products.

The details should be put in the public domain, and the questions that have arisen should be answered

Other issues need to be explained or resolved. Trump said that India had "agreed to stop buying Russian oil." India has not yet commented on it, but the Kremlin has said that it has not received any indication from India of halting the purchase of Russian oil. Such a stoppage would only hurt India's interests and its relations with a reliable and long-standing friend, and would amount to yielding to pressure from an unreliable country led by a whimsical leader. The White House press secretary said that India had "committed to $500 billion of investments into the United States, including for transportation, for energy and for agricultural products as well." There is no explanation for this claim from India. While Trump said the tariffs would be cut "immediately", Goyal said that the details would be shared "soon". The details should be put in the public domain, and the questions that have arisen should be answered, and the concerns addressed at the earliest.

US slips, China climbs, India is missing

Recent trends have seen a shift in research output of universities across the world, with institutions in China surging ahead of those in the United States and other countries, especially in some frontier areas of science and technology. Global university rankings, which are revised and updated every year, have noted this trend. The US universities have always led the world in research and innovation. Almost all the pioneering discoveries and inventions of the past many decades have come from the US. Harvard has an iconic status as the origin of many innovations, but its position is now being challenged by Chinese universities. According to Leiden rankings, which rank universities based on research output, quality, and impact, Harvard has now been pushed to third place, and the first two positions have gone to Chinese universities: Zhejiang University and Shanghai Jiao Tong University. Except for the third spot, most of the remaining nine positions are held by Chinese universities in the top 10. Six major US universities that ranked in the top 10 are no longer even in the top 15.

The shift in rankings has happened more because Chinese universities have improved their positions than because the US universities have declined. Chinese universities have tremendously increased their research output, and the number of peer-reviewed papers in international journals. That has boosted their rankings. Harvard is still doing high-quality research. It is a pioneer in innovation, and has top-quality faculty. Other leading US universities have also maintained their standards. But all of them are facing stiffer competition from China. Chinese universities are producing more scientific papers annually than their US counterparts. As a result, the relative positions are changing. The Times Higher Education, an agency that ranks universities, has noted that 'there is a big shift coming, a bit of a new world order in global dominance of higher education and research.' Leiden has started producing another ranking system based on a different academic database. Harvard is No 1 in that ranking, but 12 of the next 13 schools are Chinese.

India has lessons to learn from the shifting academic and research power in the world

China has worked to a plan and invested billions in higher education and research. Special attention has been paid to fields such as artificial intelligence, engineering, renewable energy, materials science, and medicine. Universities have close links with industry and research institutes. While a large part of the research in the US is done by students from other countries, most of the students and faculty in China are from China only. India has lessons to learn from the shifting academic and research power in the world. It is nowhere in the global picture, and must start somewhere.

FROM DRONES TO DOCTRINE

Rethinking the future of war

Technology alone cannot win wars; doctrine, tactics, and culture remain decisive

LT GEN HARINDER SINGH (RETD)

Wars in Ukraine and Gaza offer many lessons for the future of warfare. But, when we remain beholden to the use of new technology, and sweeping lessons from it, we risk overlooking other important factors: doctrine, tactics, and culture are equally significant. Any useful military change must be rooted not only in technological induction but also in extensive experimentation with cultural and doctrinal effects. Care must, therefore, be taken to apply the right lessons.

The central question is: what will future wars look like? Will they blend old and new ways, fusing two distinct paradigms, or evolve into a new model of warfare with radical battlefield effects? The truth lies somewhere in between. Ongoing wars blur our understanding of where warfare is headed. For India, the narrative and polemics surrounding the success of Operation Sindoor further complicate the picture.

What is changing?

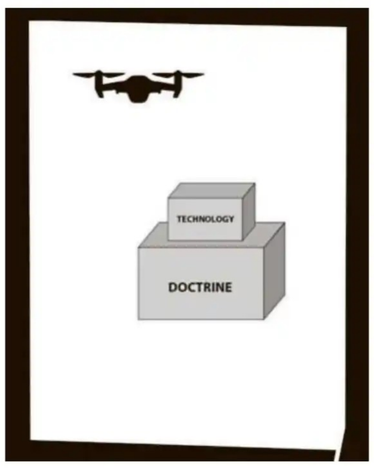
One truth is undeniable: warfare is changing at a rapid pace, and the evolutionary model of change no longer suffices. Driven by geopolitical, technological, and social factors, the pace of change necessitates a revolutionary approach. A simplistic characterisation of warfare, without taking cognisance of its multiple dimensions, might not be prudent.

Three aspects standout. First, wars are no longer confined to the battlefront. They increasingly penetrate the hinterland, raising the political costs of a protracted war. They test a State's capacity, and the will and resilience of its leaders, populace, and the military. On the battlefront, they underscore the importance of industrial resilience, particularly in munition production and in the depth of peacetime inventories.

Ukraine and Russia have struggled to maintain the daily refill of munitions. Russia, once an industrial giant, now relies on industrially poorer allies, like North Korea and Iran, to cover shortfalls. Had the May 2025 conflict lasted longer, its impact could have been remarkably different. Meanwhile, China's extensive military infrastructure along our borders makes the case for India's military resilience even more compelling.

Second, technological developments are reshaping warfighting. Unmanned systems, though not new, are now widely available and affordable, adding quality and new dimensions to combat — where the enemy can be engaged from above, rather than frontally. Artificial Intelligence (AI) further enhances transparency and decision-making by processing vast amounts of data. Yet, doubts remain about whether AI can credibly level the playing field between unequal adversaries.

Warfare is also expanding into space and cyberspace. With satellites projected to quintuple from 10,000 to 40,000 over the next decade, space warfare may extend beyond communications, navigation, and surveillance, to kinetic or non-kinetic strikes against adversary



capabilities. Outer space is the next shadowy area of combat, to blind an opponent, or deliver anonymous strikes.

Meanwhile, cyberspace has become a new constant battlefield, and the electromagnetic spectrum has been weaponised beyond imagination. Its convergence with space, quantum, and hypersonic technologies could create far more debilitating effects.

Third, hybrid warfare — through propaganda, subversion, and proxies — remains intrinsic to conventional warfare. While it may not alter the balance of military power, it disrupts an adversary's decision-making. India and Pakistan's continued celebration of their May 2025 successes shows how hybrid warfare shapes public perception and influences political and military leadership.

What is the challenge?

These changes unfold against a rapidly shifting global strategic environment. This poses a few challenges. First, we live in a tripolar world dominated by the United States, China, and Russia, with the latter two increasingly aligned to contest US dominance. As Washington becomes increasingly ambivalent about its global role, India finds itself at the intersection of these poles, sometimes benefitting, but mostly struggling to assert its salience. This underscores the need for a resilient India.

Second, the volatility of global politics accentuates the pursuit of new technologies, potentially expanding the traditional battlespace. For India, future wars are not confined to contested borders; the hinterland is acutely vulnerable. Its population, infrastructure, resources, economic and financial strength, and internal cohesion — all are at risk. The Indian State and society must demonstrate resilience, or risk early cracks and fatigue in a protracted conflict.

Finally, India's leaders must absorb technological changes, and adapt to directing future wars. While technology facilitates control and command, the chaos it generates makes it all the more difficult to do so. Over-reliance can stress the leadership, and even become debilitating.

Also, technology alone cannot win a war, it must be incorporated into doctrines, concepts, and tactics, lest capabilities rest on false foundations. Drones have produced a stalemate in Ukraine by substituting for Ukraine's missing capabilities — aircraft, tanks, and artillery. By the time these deficits were addressed, drones had already evolved into an alternative capability, now touted as the new way of war.

What could be done?

Three aspects are pertinent. First, India's policymakers must distil lessons from the wars in Ukraine and Gaza across geostrategic, warfighting, and societal contexts. A tripolar world will intensify global politics, forcing difficult strategic choices. Militarily, India must build a more tech-savvy force to deter adversaries, while societal cohesion remains vital to State resilience, and an integral aspect of its security.

Second, India must assess the future of warfare holistically — doctrine, tactics, and technology together. Land power, the integration of air and sea domains, battlefield transparency, precision, lethality, and hybrid warfare are key aspects. Also, cyber, space, quantum, and hypersonics must be leveraged to offset adversary advantages.

Third, India must reshape its defence resourcing, logistics, and future acquisitions. Industry must evolve rapidly to deliver battlefield needs, and expedite the acquisition patterns. As technological boundaries are blurring, warfare will increasingly demand a collaborative effort between the State, industry, and academia.

(The writer commanded the Leh Corps during the Eastern Ladakh crisis in 2020)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

The quiet gift of thrift

Teaching children to save early may matter more than money we give them

GEORGE NETTO

We sometimes gift money to children on their birthdays or for their scholastic achievements, often forgetting it is a good opportunity to drive home the message of thrift in the euphoria of the moment. Advocating thrift simultaneously makes the gift far more meaningful than a mere pecuniary present.

Indeed, the habit of saving for the proverbial rainy day should, ideally, be inculcated in children early in life if it's to benefit them in the long run. Thrift and providence go hand in hand, one supplementing the other.

They begin right at home, and a piggy bank is perhaps the best starting point for children to learn the value of money and the need to save it for a contingency. It is so essential a part of their upbringing. And it is here that the age-old adage "Little drops make an ocean" can have a positive effect on impressionable minds.

Thrift is basically the avoidance of wasteful expenditure. When given more pocket money than necessary, youngsters are tempted to squander it undesirably and irresponsibly. Many take to bad habits due to the generous allowances they receive from their indulgent parents. During my boarding school days in the 1950s, the prefect prudently pruned our weekly pocket money to a mere trifle – just enough to buy oneself a snack.

Yet some of the boarders diligently saved even this pittance, accumulating enough over the months to buy themselves something really useful or necessary. Thrift implies, among other things, denying oneself something pleasurable.

There's perhaps no better way to teach children thrift than by personal example, for action speaks louder than mere words. Often in our eagerness to keep up with the Joneses, our children see us splurge on clothes and other luxuries or non-essentials that we could well do without. Envy is a strong motivator that runs counter to thrift, sometimes neutralising it. However, when firm restraint is exercised in this regard, children imbibe the spirit of thrift, however unpalatable it may initially be to them.

Yet, thrift is an attribute that's inherent in most people. Indeed, thrift has a habit of growing on one, for once it takes root, it cannot be shaken off easily. An indispensable quality, the essence of thrift is a desire to save financially for the future and its uncertainties. Thrift is, quintessentially, financial foresight – the diametric opposite of extravagance, the bane of so many families these days.

As such, the importance of teaching children the value of thrift cannot be overstressed since it can go a long way in bettering the quality of their adult lives and freeing them from financial worry. The slogan "Catch 'em young!" applies as much here as it does to any other worthwhile effort directed at children.

All in all, a truly worthwhile gift that we can give our children is a robust sense of thrift. With the cost of everything spiralling, thrift has become less of a virtue and more of an absolute necessity for most of us these days.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Transparency needed on national security concerns

The editorial 'Memoir row: A question of answers' (Feb 5) discusses the controversy surrounding former Army Chief General M M Naravane's memoir *Four Stars of Destiny*, which hasn't received government clearance for publication. The Lok Sabha Speaker's denial of permission to the leader of the opposition, Rahul Gandhi, to quote from the book has sparked debate. The government's evasiveness on national security concerns has raised several questions. If General Naravane's allegations are false, he should be held accountable. Labelling those who question the government 'anti-national' is undemocratic. A more transparent approach would serve the nation's best interests.

M Basavaraj, Davanagere

Govt is accountable

I refer to 'Memoir Row: A question of answers' (Feb 5). Labelling those who question the government 'anti-national' is misguided. The author's credibility as an insider lends weight to the memoir's authenticity. Parliament should be more responsive to such issues.

Sheril Genu, Bengaluru

Introduce new courses

Apropos 'Govt forms panel to recommend reforms in tech, education' (Feb 5), the panel's formation is welcome. To be effective, it should seek input from colleges, students, stakeholders, and firms. Reducing the April 2026 admissions and introducing new courses with increased seats could be considered. The panel should prioritise creating jobs and addressing unemployment among engineers.

A K Shariff, Bengaluru

Poor planning

Traffic on Hosur Road was disrupted for nearly 10 days after a portion of NH-44 collapsed near Attibele during underpass construction. The incident highlights poor planning, weak safety measures, and inadequate supervision. Authorities should conduct proper soil checks, regular inspections, and monitor construction activities closely. Providing temporary roads, clear warning signs, and effective traffic control can ease public trouble.

Khushi Kashyap, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: **letters@deccanherald.co.in** (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender's postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

North Indians, knowing only Hindi, flood here for menial jobs- cleaning tables, construction labour, *pani puri* stalls- lacking opportunities back home. But our kids, mastering English, jet off to the US or London, earning crores.

M R K Panneerselvam, DMK leader

Nothing in the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.

Martin Luther King Jr.

TO BE PRECISE

IN PERSPECTIVE

To whom does the State really owe?

The purpose of tax revenue is to advance the well-being of society, including those who may contribute little or not at all

ABIDA U C

Year after year, the Budget season brings a familiar debate to the fore: whose resources are being spent on whom?

The question surfaces in multiple forms: Is the middle-class financing freebies and welfare schemes for poorer populations? Are southern states subsidising development in northern states? Should a greater share of revenues generated by the highest tax-paying cities be reinvested for their own development? The debates are often heated and highly politicised, shaped by competing narratives and agendas. At a more foundational level, however, these discussions invoke one question: to whom does the State owe the tax revenues it collects?

There are two ways of approaching the question. The first is to see taxation as a straightforward transaction between the taxpayer and the State. Here, taxes are the price we pay for public services — roads, buses, waste management, and maintenance of law and order. It emerges from the view that markets fail due to externalities and, therefore, require a State mechanism to fix the failures. This relationship resembles that of a customer and a service provider. Those who pay more expect more in return. If the middle-class contributes a larger share of taxes, public spending should reflect middle-class priorities. Taken to its conclusion, taxes collected in a city like Mumbai or Bengaluru should primarily be spent in that city.

An alternative perspective places taxation within a broader conception of citizenship. Here, the primary relationship is between the State and the citizen. Taxation is understood as a civic obligation that supports a shared political community. Citizenship is not contingent on one's tax contribution; it reflects membership in a collective with reciprocal responsibilities. From this standpoint, the purpose of tax revenue is to advance the well-being of society, including those who may contribute little or not at all. The State's obligation is not to ensure individual returns on tax payments, but to act in public interest.

The constitutional and legal framework is aligned with this latter conception. The Constitution treats taxation as a legal obligation, not as a service contract. The articles governing taxation do not offer a guarantee of individual payoff. In fact, the Constitution directs the States to promote a social order based on justice, and minimise inequalities in income, status, facilities, and opportunities (Article 38, Directive Principles of State Policy). Article 39 explicitly directs the State policies to secure adequate livelihoods for all, ensure that ownership and control of material resources serve the common good, and prevent concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment. Therefore, it is not individual payoffs, but redistribution of resources that is a core constitutional mandate for India.

India's system of fiscal federalism reflects this redistributive intent. Tax revenues collected by the Union and state governments are pooled into consolidated funds and allocated through the budgetary process in line with nationally determined priorities. There is no institutional mechanism that earmarks tax collections for specific priorities or mandates their return to the jurisdictions from which they originate. While demands for such arrangements have grown in recent years, adopting them would require a fundamental reconfiguration of the relationship between the Union and the states. The Finance Commission reinforces the redistributive principle by explicitly directing more resources to underperforming states, using criteria such as income distance to reduce regional inequalities.

Redistribution is also central to the constitutional commitment to social justice. Progressive taxation rests on the principle that those with greater economic capacity should contribute a larger share towards public resources. This is not a moral preference, but a structural requirement that seeks to reduce inequality. Despite this, India's tax system has had limited redistributive impact, partly due to its heavy reliance on indirect and consumption taxes, which place a disproportionate burden on lower-income households, and a relatively weak emphasis on progressive income and wealth taxation.

There are many legitimate questions worth debating: How should redistribution be balanced against incentives for efficiency and good governance? How to ensure that tax collection inefficiency does not lead to the salaried class being disproportionately burdened compared to the wealthy and elite? How can public money be spent more effectively?

The idea that the taxation benefits must flow back to the people or places from which taxes originate misinterprets the basics of the constitutional relationship between the State and the people. It shifts the focus from citizens to taxpayers and, in doing so, weakens the constitutional promise of redistribution.

(The writer is Research Associate, Centre for Budget and Policy Studies)

The Kali's slide from regulated ecotourism to unregulated exploitation

GIRIDHAR KULKARNI

At dawn, the Kali flows almost unnoticed. Mist rises from her surface, hornbill wings cut across the canopy, and the river bends silently through some of the most intact forests of the Western Ghats. This is not a river built for spectacle. It sustains forests, wildlife, and communities precisely because it has long been allowed to remain undisturbed.

That fragile balance is now under strain. In the name of adventure tourism, the Kali is being broken into commercial segments, her quiet stretches converted into rafting routes by multiple operators. What appears to be a routine administrative step in the Ganeshgudi–Dandeli stretch is, in fact, the outcome of a specific order issued by the deputy commissioner, Uttara Kannada District—as chairperson of the River Rafting and Water Adventure Sports Management and Monitoring Committee—permitting private operators to conduct rafting on the Kali River.

This is not merely a dispute over who conducts rafting. It illustrates how a district-level decision, taken in disregard of established government policy and inter-departmental communications, allows short-term commercial interests and procedural expediency to override ecological limits, public safety, and the state's conservation and revenue commitments.

The rafting stretch flows through the Hornbill Conservation Reserve, contiguous with the Kali Tiger Reserve. India hosts nine hornbill species, and Dandeli supports all four found in southern India—Malabar pied, Malabar grey, great, and Indian grey hornbills. The river and surrounding forests also sustain tigers, leopards, sloth bears, otters, fish eagles, marsh crocodiles, amphibians, and other riparian species dependent on quiet riverbanks and intact canopies.

Hornbills depend on large old-growth trees for nesting and are highly sensitive to disturbance. Even low-level human intrusion along river corridors can disrupt breeding, making extended rafting operations—even as Dandeli hosts the 'Hornbill Festival'—a stark contrast between conservation rhetoric and ground reality.

Allowing private rafting is also likely to trigger a surge in resorts and homestays along the river corridor. Many already operate illegally in and around Dandeli and Ganeshgudi, with little effective enforcement by the district administration. Granting private rafting permissions will only exacerbate this trend, intensifying habitat disturbance, increasing unregulated human presence, and further complicating forest management.

For over two decades, rafting in the Kali was conducted exclusively by Jungle Lodges and Resorts Ltd (JLR), a Government of Karnataka undertaking, following a clear policy decision of the Forest, Ecology and Environment Department that rafting in such landscapes must remain tightly regulated and conservation-oriented.

Under JLR, rafting was seasonal, limited in scale, and operated by trained staff under strict safety protocols. In over 22 years, no major mishaps were reported. Operations aligned with ecological sensitivities through seasonal restrictions and coordination with forest authorities. This is not an uncritical endorsement of JLR's entire tourism portfolio — concerns exist regarding tourism within core tiger habitat at K Gudi and a few other locations — but in riverine forest landscapes such as Dandeli and Ganeshgudi, its rafting operations demonstrated how tourism can be conducted with restraint, safety, and ecological responsibility.

That model is now being dismantled. Private operators have begun rafting under permits issued by the district administration and, in some cases, illegally—contrary to long-standing government decisions and often without mandatory approvals. Despite repeated assurances to act against violations, these activities continue, eroding regulatory credibility and ecological safeguards.

Particularly troubling is the argument that the Kali River falls outside the Forest Department's jurisdiction because it is not explicitly mentioned in the Reserve Forest notification for the Ambeli–Ilava to Moulangi stretch. This ignores ecological reality: the river's entry points lie within forest land, both banks are forested, and the river is the lifeline of these ecosystems. The Forest Department routinely undertakes risky and pays *ex gratia* for wildlife incidents — especially crocodile attacks, which are common in and around Dandeli. Excluding forest approval for rafting based on a technical omission reduces governance to form over substance. It is a stark irony that the district administration expects the Forest Department to respond to such emergencies yet sidelines it when permitting private rafting, arguing that the river does not 'belong' to the department. This contradiction is nothing short of a disgrace to the Kali River.

River rafting involves fluctuating flows, submerged obstacles, and sudden dam releases. It requires trained guides, certified equipment, emergency response systems, and coordination among authorities. Fragmented, profit-driven operations pose serious safety risks, while legal and moral responsibility ultimately rests with the state.

Privatisation has also caused revenue losses. As a government undertaking, JLR reinvests its earnings into conservation, local employment, and forest protection in areas such as Dandeli. Rafting by private operators — whether legally permitted or unauthorised — diverts public revenue while increasing enforcement and ecological costs, effectively socialising losses while privatising gains.

In September 2025, JLR managing director formally objected to private operators, noting that JLR's permission had been extended until June 2028 by the Forest Department. This was consistent with the Tourism Department's 2022 communication stating that rafting in the Kali, within the Hornbill Conservation Reserve, should be conducted only by JLR. Ignoring such positions weakens governance and sets a dangerous precedent.

The Kali can either remain a living river—supporting hornbills, forests, livelihoods, and responsible ecotourism — or become another example of ecological sacrifice for short-term gains. Restoring exclusivity of rafting operations to JLR is not about resisting tourism or competition; it recognises that certain landscapes are too ecologically sensitive to be governed purely by market logic.

(The writer is a wildlife conservationist)

A recent production of *Othello* proves that small creative flowers can grow between the dreary slabs of cultural concrete laid by the Communist Party of China

Rethinking Shakespeare in Shanghai

ANDREW HIGGINS

Tiffany Cheung, left, who plays Othello's wife, Desdemona, and Cao reading their lines backstage. The troupe ran into trouble after printing *Othello* fliers showing a Chinese Desdemona leaning on her foreign husband, prompting angry warnings from a Shanghai cultural impresario who deemed the image—and its suggestion of cross-cultural romance—offensive. NYT

Thomas Caron has performed as Hamlet, Macbeth and King Lear, but Othello, the fourth of William Shakespeare's great tragic heroes, was out of reach for the American actor without resorting to blackface — until he got to China. "There was no way I was ever going to play *Othello* in the United States," Caron, 74, said. The actor is white and was unlikely, because of racial sensitivities, to play a character Shakespeare described as a "Moor," early 17th-century English parlance for a dark-skinned foreigner.

The bilingual version of the play in which Caron recently performed in Shanghai reimagines the story's racial dynamics: Othello, played by Caron in English, is a clueless American mercenary despised and ruined by a Chinese Iago, a Machiavellian villain consumed by jealousy and a hatred of foreigners.

Instead of Venice and Cyprus, Shakespeare's setting for *Othello*, the Shanghai version takes place on an island at the mouth of the Yangtze River, where an American has been hired to help fight the Taiping rebellion, a bloody revolt in the 19th century. Iago curses Othello not as a Moor but a *laowai*, a mildly pejorative but widely used Chinese term for Westerners.

"I retell you again and again, I hate that *laowai*," Iago says in Chinese.

This recent low-budget production of *Othello* — which was staged inside a shopping mall — shows that while China under President Xi Jinping has become increasingly authoritarian, the State's reach isn't absolute.

Between dreary slabs of cultural concrete laid by Communist Party commissars, small private flowers can still grow between the cracks, from clubs offering space for amateur stand-up comedians to hole-in-the-wall music venues and small theatres. So long as they steer clear of myriad red lines set by the party.

Rockbund Art Museum, a private Shanghai museum, regularly hosts exhibits and events that while not overtly dissident still test boundaries, including a Shakespeare-themed musical that invited the audience to "rethink their lives and find their own value." The production, based on a South Korean reworking of Shakespeare, mixed the protagonists from *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, who rebel against their scripted roles to choose their own paths.

Rockbund is hosting an exhibition of contemporary art called "The Great Camouflage," which touches on sensitive issues like street protests, dissent and the despair of angry young people.

What will and will not be allowed by the party is hard to predict, Caron, the actor, said. He was surprised, for example, that he was permitted to stage *What Where*, a short play by Samuel Beckett that revolves around violent interrogations. "I thought this would never pass, but it did," he recalled.

Shakespeare has generally been safe ground in China since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. His plays, first performed in China in translation more than a century ago, were banned during the Cultural Revolution—a decade-long period of political frenzy unleashed by Mao in 1966—but have been revived with gusto since the 1980s, despite their often subversive political probing.

Nan Z Da, a Chinese-born English professor at Johns Hopkins, argues in her recent book *The Chinese Tragedy of King Lear* that "the tragedy of Maoist and post-Maoist China and Shakespeare's *King Lear* are uncannily similar."

In Da's telling, the fate of Lear's favourite daughter, Cordelia, who is cruelly punished for refusing to feed her father's thirst for professions of love and obedience, mirrors that of Mao's victims trapped in "a world of perverse love, gross flattery, silencing, schoolyard cruelty and desolate deaths."

Nobody in China is openly discussing such a comparison.

Wang Meng, 30, a talented newcomer to the stage who is also a teacher in Shanghai, insisted she was uninterested in politics and simply found "great personal satisfaction" playing the role of Iago's wife Emilia. (The character is initially complicit in her husband's mendacious machinations against Othello but later dies for the truth.) Emilia, Wang said, shows that a "woman can stand on her own" and "does not always have to obey men." With questioning of the party snuffed out inside China, even highly educated theatregoers may not connect what Shakespeare has to say about tyranny to their lived reality—or at least they keep any such thoughts to themselves.

Ling Yanduo, 23, a chemistry student from the coastal province of Fujian who attended the Shanghai show, said she liked Shakespeare because "his stories never get dated." But, when asked whether there were any parallels between these stories and China's current situation, she said, "I see no connections."

China's safe space for Shakespeare has been kept open in part by the fact that Xi has declared himself a big fan. According to Prime Minister Keir Starmer of Britain, Xi spoke warmly during their meeting in Beijing last week about his love of Shakespeare.

The recent staging of *Othello*, put on by Shanghai Shakespeare, an amateur troupe formed by Caron and Chinese actors, avoided China's elaborate state vetting procedures for all shows that charge admission by making the show free. None of the actors were paid and its performance space, a bare hall between a health club and clothing boutique, was donated free of charge by a high-end shopping mall. A tea house donated a room for rehearsals.

However, it was not all smooth sailing for the troupe. It briefly had problems when it printed flyers for *Othello* that showed a Chinese Desdemona, Othello's wife, leaning on the shoulder of her foreign husband. This prompted angry warnings from a Shanghai culture impresario that spotlighting romance between a foreign man and Chinese woman was offensive.

China's Internet regulator blocked the troupe's website, which featured the flyer and a quotation from Xi that "Chinese art will further develop only when we make foreign things serve China." The troupe deleted the picture showing interracial romance from its site but kept Xi's words, and the show went ahead. "We are not pushing any cause," Caron said, "just telling stories."

Under rules issued by the China Association of Performing Arts, a government-affiliated body that both promotes and polices culture, artists are required to show "love for the party" and commit to serving "the people and socialism."

The State-funded theatre scene therefore leans heavily toward propaganda, featuring shows like *Eternal Wave*, a recent drama by the Shanghai Song and Dance Troupe about an underground Communist telegraph worker in the 1940s, and the *Battle of Shanghai*, an acrobatic spectacular that tells the story of a battle over a power plant during the Communist revolution.

"The biggest problem with Chinese theatre is propaganda plays, but ordinary people will never go to these," said Sun Huizhu, a professor at the Shanghai Theatre Academy who has worked on several productions of Shakespeare. "But," he added, "there are some very good things happening in private theatres."

Shakespeare, he said, is a perennial favourite, though the playwright is better known to many Chinese for his story lines, which have been borrowed by traditional Chinese opera, than for his actual plays, whose language, even in translation, is "too complicated and very far away."

Birthday Celebration By Five Daughters, an opera written in the 1980s and performed many times since, is set during the Ming dynasty and roughly follows the plot of *King Lear*, exploring greed and family intrigue around a needy patriarch.

Cao Jifeng, 43, an amateur actor who has a day job with a foreign pet products company and played Iago in Shanghai, said Shakespeare's plays were not about politics but universal human failings like jealousy. "No matter whether you are Chinese, European or American you have a common human nature," he said. **NYT**

When governors turn political

NAYAKARA VEERESHA

The conduct of governors in Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka during the special address mandated under Article 176(1) of the Constitution has resurrected a crucial debate on the role and relevance of constitutional conventions in an elected democracy. In recent times, what ought to be routine constitutional practice is increasingly turning into a democratic crisis. Notably, this pattern has emerged only in states ruled by parties outside the National Democratic Alliance. The conduct of governors in these states goes beyond political disagreements and risks eroding the foundations of constitutional democracy.

According to British academic Sir Ivory Jennings, "Constitutional conventions provide the flesh that clothes the dry bones of the law; they make the legal constitution work; they keep it in touch with the growth of ideas."

During the Constituent Assembly Debates, B R Ambedkar stated, "If the Constitution remains in principle the same as we intend that it should be, that the Governor should be a purely constitutional Governor, with no power of interference in the administration of the province." Article 176(1) mandates that "at the commencement of the first session after each general election to the Legislative Assembly and at the commencement of the first session of each year, the Governor shall address the Legislative Assembly or, in the case of a state having a Legislative Council, both Houses assembled together...." This provision, inherited from the British Cabinet model of parliamentary democracy, leaves little room for interpretation.

On the governor's conduct, Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah states that it was "against the provisions of the Indian Constitution" and "clearly violates Articles 176 and 163." He also indicated that the state government was considering approaching the Supreme Court.

The constitutional position is unambiguous. The special address under Article 176(1) is a mandatory constitutional function. Governors do not enjoy discretionary powers in this matter, unlike in areas governed by the fifth and sixth Schedules. Governors of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka have failed to discharge this duty in accordance with the Constitution. Ironically, even as the Union government repeals colonial-era laws and has reportedly issued a circular to rename Raj Bhavans as Lok Bhavans on the premise of decolonisation, the functioning of these offices remains far removed from democratic norms. A change in nomenclature may be symbolic, but what is truly required is a change in style and substance.

The issue at hand is not the governor's personal or political disagreement with the contents of the address, which is prepared and approved by the Council of Ministers. Constitutional convention requires the governor to address the legislature using Cabinet-approved text. Any deviation from this practice lies outside the constitutional framework and undermines the federal spirit.

Differences between the Union and state governments are a natural feature of democracy. However, once appointed, a governor's personal and political affiliation must cease to influence their conduct—at least in theory, if not always in practice. The Supreme Court of India, in *B P Singhal vs Union of India & Anr* (2004), held that as the constitutional head of the state, a governor may often articulate the views of the state government, which may be neither his own nor that of the Centre. Similarly, in *Shivraj Singh Chouhan & Ors. vs Speaker, Madhya Pradesh Legislative Assembly & Ors.* (2020), the Court emphasised that "the Governor is expected to discharge the role of a constitutional statesman". This spirit of constitutional statesmanship is conspicuously absent in the actions of governors in non-NDA-ruled states.

As the organic link between the Union and state governments, the governor's role is to strengthen the federal relations, not strain them. The growing Union-state tensions emanating from Raj Bhavans point to a troubling political bias against addresses prepared by state Cabinets. In Tamil Nadu, the Raj Bhavan issued a press note explaining the governor's refusal to deliver the address, prompting Chief Minister M K Stalin to call for scrapping the customary governor's address to the legislature altogether.

The Constituent Assembly retained the office of the governor to serve as a constitutional guardian of the state, not as a political actor. Viewed through the prism of constitutional governance, the conduct of governors of Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka has only deepened the democratic crisis. If the Union government is serious about dismantling colonial relics, it must reflect on whether it is prepared to reconsider the functioning and the future of Lok Bhavans, given the manner in which these offices are currently being used.

(The writer is an assistant professor at the Symbiosis Law School–Symbiosis International [Deemed University], Pune)

OUR PAGES OF HISTORY

50 YEARS AGO: FEBRUARY 1976

Parliament passes Bill to curb closures & lay-offs

New Delhi, February 5
Parliament has approved the Bill placing certain reasonable restrictions on the employers' right to lay-off, retrenchment and closure with the Lok Sabha passing it after a three-hour debate. The Rajya Sabha had already passed the measure. Described by Labour Minister Raghunatha Reddy as a landmark in the history of industrial relations law, the measure received the general support of all sections of the House. Mr. Reddy said punishment provided in the Bill was more severe than that prescribed in the Industrial Disputes Act.

25 YEARS AGO: FEBRUARY 2001

PMK pulls out from NDA

New Delhi, Feb 5
In a major political setback to the BJP-led NDA government at the Centre, the five-MP group of PMK today withdrew from the ruling coalition but decided to extend "outside support to the government in times of crisis" as two of its ministers, N T Shanmugham and E Ponnuswamy, resigned from the Vajpayee Government. Tamil Nadu politics today had its shadow on the Centre in view of the coming assembly polls in the state along with other five states to be held in April-May this year. Observers here feel that the PMK pullout is not going to impact the NDA coalition.

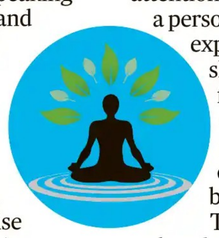
OASIS | NANDKISHORE

Blessed state of being a volunteer

Just when I sat to write this piece, I thought I will toss this question before the readers of this column. But let me make it amply clear that my questioning is in the context of listening and reading of strictly spiritual nature and not in the context of any other domain. The question is why should anyone read that which I write, when each one's span of life is limited and, knowledge to be gained and attained in this limited span is unlimited?

Does anyone have that much time available to oneself that one would spend one's invaluable time in reading or listening to each and every one who writes and speaks?

The idea behind this kind of questioning is not to discourage reading and listening; it is to provoke you to do it more in such a way that your reading and listening, writing and speaking becomes intense, focussed and endowed with a clear sense of direction so that your progress becomes clear to you in spiritual reality, the dimension to enrich which you read and listen, write and speak. But, coming to a conclusion and making a wise decision as to who in reality is living liberated is the greatest decision in life as that one alone is worthy of our attention if we are a spiritual person and we have come to realise that our thirst for liberation is real and the first priority in life.



Such a person alone is worthy of our attention. Paying attention to such a person is full of potential for our exploring our own strength, shaping our own destiny and finally becoming living liberated and hence potentially, possibly and probably the conduit for others too to become the same.

Those who are liberated, they definitely become volunteers (*parmarthi*). This alone is the self-test which has no invigilator. We ourselves are the examinee examiner and the result too. So long as the spirit of becoming a volunteer hasn't become clear in one's consciousness, one must know that one has yet to hit the finishing point of clarity about one's life's ideal mission and real vision.

Volunteer means becoming determined to do good without any expectation from life to get rewarded in return. Volunteer means coming to realise that you are here indeed to help and serve others.

However, open mystery or the sacred secret behind our transforming into volunteers is that whole life itself begins to appear before us as the blessed most reward in which there is hardly any place left for any expectation or reward.

Police need court nod for further probe into criminal case: SC

Says it is mandatory for police to file an apt application before the magistrate concerned

ASHISH TRIPATHI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court has ruled that the police or an investigating agency cannot undertake further investigation in a criminal case without first obtaining permission from the court concerned, reaffirming judicial control over criminal investigations.

A bench of Justices Rajesh Bindal and Vijay Bishnoi said that if the police or investigating agency believes further investigation is required in any case to bring out the complete facts and truth, it is mandatory for them to file an appropriate application before the magistrate or court concerned.

The police, the bench said, cannot direct or initiate further investigation on their own.

A separate observation made clear that the authority to order further investigation vests exclusively with the court, not with investigating agencies.

"The power to direct further investigation in a case rests solely at the discretion of magistrate or court concerned, and it is not for the police or investigating authorities to take such a decision," the bench said.

Allowing an appeal filed by Pramod Kumar and others against the Allahabad High Court's judgment of November 20, 2023, the apex court examined whether, after submitting a final report under Section 173(2) of the Criminal Procedure Code—corresponding to Section 193(3) of the Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, 2023—the police or investigating agency can conduct further investigation under Section 173(8) of the CrPC without obtaining the leave of the magistrate or court concerned.

Referring to its earlier ruling in Vinay Tyagi vs Irshad Ali (2013), the bench noted that although Section 173(8) of the CrPC does not expressly require prior court permission for further investigation, judicial practice over time has evolved to make such permission necessary.

"Therefore, the practice of seeking the leave of the court will have to be read into the provisions of Section 173(8), and it is essentially a prerequisite for directing further investigation," the court said.

The bench also took strong exception to an order passed by a Superintendent of Police directing further investigation in a case related to an alleged gang rape, holding that it was issued in clear defiance of the procedure laid down under the law.

It said such action amounted to an abuse of authority and undermined the role of the judiciary.

Himachal bans mobile phones in all schools from March 1

SHIMLA, PTI: Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu on Thursday announced a complete ban on the use of mobile phones by students in all government and private schools across Himachal Pradesh, effective from March 1, 2026.

The announcement was made during the closing ceremony of the 69th National School Games Under-19 Girls Handball Tournament held in Bilaspur district.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief minister said that the state government is committed to providing world-class education that would enable students to compete on a global stage.

Sukhu detailed strict enforcement measures, stating that any student found in possession of a phone would face a fine of Rs 500 and the confiscation of the device.

"Additionally, parents will be required to attend mandatory counselling sessions at the school. To ensure long-term compliance, Education Department has been tasked with drafting a Standard Operating Procedure to address violations," the CM said.

Uttar Pradesh to treat Chinese manjha deaths as murder

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Taking a serious view of deaths caused by Chinese manjha (kite string) in the state, the Uttar Pradesh government on Thursday said such deaths would now be treated as "murder", and offenders would be dealt with sternly.

Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Thursday issued directions to officials to launch a statewide campaign to crack down on the manufacture and sale of Chinese manjha.

According to the police, raids were conducted on shops selling Chinese manjha in several localities of the state capital.

The government's decision came in the wake of the death of a 33-year-old man due to Chinese manjha in the Haiderganj area of the state capital on Wednesday.

According to sources, the man, identified as Mohammed Shoeb, was riding a motorcycle and was on his way back home when the manjha became entangled around his neck and slashed his veins.

Shoeb somehow managed to stop the bike but lost consciousness shortly afterwards. He was rushed to hospital, where he was declared dead on arrival.

Earlier, there have been several similar incidents in different parts of the state, in which many people lost their lives, while several others were injured.

Last month, the Allahabad High Court directed the state government to strictly enforce the ban on the manufacture, sale and use of Chinese manjha.

The directive was issued while the court was hearing a Public Interest Litigation.

12 Maoists with Rs 46L bounty surrender in Chhattisgarh

BIJAPUR, PTI: Twelve Naxalites carrying a collective bounty of Rs 46 lakh surrendered before the police in Chhattisgarh's Bijapur district on Thursday, a senior official said.

The cadres, including eight women, belonging to the 'south sub zonal buro' of Maoists, turned themselves in before senior police officials here under the Bastar police's 'Poona Margem' (from rehabilitation to social reintegration) initiative, the Bijapur SP said.

Rajasthan honeymoon horror: Wife, lover held for man's murder

JAIPUR, PTI: A 23-year-old woman allegedly orchestrated the murder of her husband, just three months after their marriage, in collusion with her long-time boyfriend and two accomplices in Rajasthan's Sri Ganganagar, police said on Thursday.

The accused wife, Anjali (23), her lover Sanjay (25), and his friends Rohit (20) and Siddharth (20) were arrested on Tuesday, Sri Ganganagar SP Amrita Duhan said.

The incident occurred on the night of January 30 in the district when Ashish Kumar (27), a resident of 1 KLM village under the Rawla police station area, went for a walk with his wife after dinner.

He was allegedly attacked with sticks on a deserted stretch of road near the village, and later strangled with a muffler when he did not succumb immediately, the SP said.

What initially appeared to be a case of robbery and murder was later found to be a pre-planned murder conspired by the woman, Duhan said.

Anjali had been in a relationship with Sanjay for the past 6-7 years and was unhappy with her arranged marriage to Ashish on October 30 last year, the police said, adding that her family was aware of the affair.

Both Anjali and Sanjay were graduates and had studied at the same college in Sri Ganganagar, where their relationship developed. After marriage, Anjali allegedly wanted to pursue an MA in Sri Ganganagar to continue meeting Sanjay, but her husband opposed it, leading to resentment, the police said.

She conveyed this to Sanjay. Investigations revealed that 16 days before the murder, Anjali visited her parental home in Sadulshahar, where she and Sanjay allegedly finalised the plan to eliminate Ashish.

MISCELLANY

◆ COMICS ◆

Blondie

IT REALLY BUGS ME THAT THE ALGORITHM IN ALL MY SOCIAL MEDIA KNOWS ME SO WELL
IT FEELS LIKE IT KNOWS ME BETTER THAN I KNOW MYSELF!
TELL ME ABOUT IT!
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I WANTED THESE SHOES UNTIL THE AD FOR THEM SHOWED UP IN MY FEED AT LEAST 57 TIMES!

Hagar The Horrible

Beetle Bailey

Peanuts

TWO NOTCHES ?
I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO KNOW WHAT YOU'RE KEEPING TRACK OF!
ONE NOTCH YESTERDAY.. TWO NOTCHES TODAY... WHERE DO YOU GO FROM HERE ?
FROM NOTCHES TO MOBILE
HEE HEE HEE

Marvin

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek

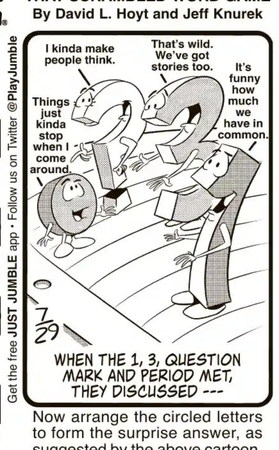
Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DBYUD

NUAAS

FSNTEO

DDCAEE


I kinda make people think.
That's wild. We've got stories too.
It's funny how much we have in common.
Things just kinda stop when I come around.
7/29
WHEN THE 1, 3, QUESTION MARK AND PERIOD MET, THEY DISCUSSED ---

Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

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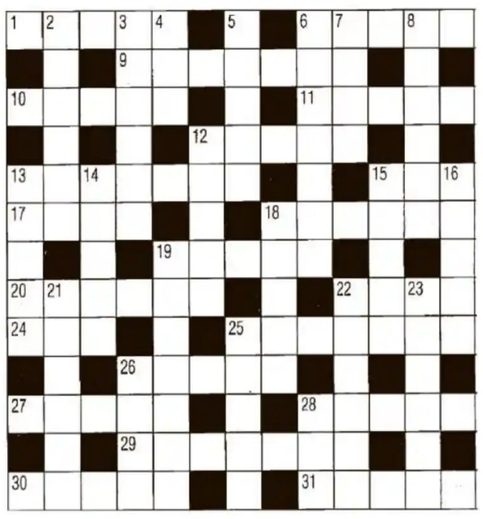
Yesterday's Jumbles: WOUND LOGIC MANNER GLOOMY
Answer: She knew the difference between stratus, cirrus and cumulus and was — ON CLOUD NINE

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 12348



CRYPTIC

ACROSS
1 Naval units? (5)
6 Right in position for good healthy fun (5)
9 Woman of Georgia (7)
10 You can bet it meant capital punishment! (5)
11 A luxurious opening for "8 Down", we hear (5)
12 He brings a bit of fire to "New Lab." (5)
13 Only in the bay does one find rubbish (7)
15 Advice helpful in the extreme? (3)
17 The immortal love racket (4)
18 It came from outer space and tore 'em to shreds! (6)
19 Older variety of berry (5)
20 Plod along with a letter to Barnaby (6)
22 No one-day building job (4)
24 Jump quietly, with a cry (3)
25 Insured a customer, looking embarrassed (7)
26 Is aware of money going in fees (5)
27 Stinking, due to a fatheaded change of diet (5)
28 Chap I had to make nervous (5)
29 Joseph's a senior citizen, just an ordinary bloke (3,4)
30 A mug's surname? (5)
31 Street woman in Perry Mason stories (5)

DOWN
2 It's good to band together again (3,3)
3 Hire, lets assume (4,2)
4 She points out an about turn (3)
5 Depression in the field? (5)
6 The batsman who's "out"? (7)
7 Piano tune with cymbals, say! (4)
8 It's in Rio, we're told, by David (6)
12 She's beautiful, but can sound alarming (5)
13 Wherein a couple have nothing but a phone (5)
14 Figure a sheep is sozzled! (3,2)
15 Singer whose heart is in English opera (5)
16 Looked curiously into the source of pride (5)
18 The Spanish join me in an Aegean island (5)
19 Encouraged by what can be done with a noted horse (5,2)
21 One is ratty when the room's in a bad state (6)
22 Instructions on record for pie-making (6)
23 Servant possibly taking the meal in (6)
25 Local cul-de-sac (5)
26 The state many Pacific islands are in (4)
28 It means very little in Portadown (3)

ACROSS
1 Small fish (5)
6 Blood-sucking insect (5)
9 Solvent (7)
10 Hidden store (5)
11 Stringed instrument (5)
12 Boxing matches (5)
13 Perfumed (7)
15 Agent (3)
17 Domestic fowl (4)
18 Introspective (6)
19 Currency unit (5)
20 Fairy king (6)
22 Unaccompanied (4)
24 Pitch (3)
25 Greedy person (7)
26 Acclaim (5)
27 Dairy product (5)
28 Derogatory (5)
29 Argument (7)
30 Slumber (5)
31 Coin (5)

DOWN
2 Strut (6)
3 European capital (6)
4 Definite article (3)
5 Hood (5)
6 Reading (7)
7 Minerals (4)
8 Seasoned (6)
12 Started (5)
13 Fire (5)
14 Go in (5)
15 Automaton (5)
16 Electricity support (5)
18 Stomach (5)
19 Pickled herring fillet (7)
21 Keg (6)
22 Position (6)
23 English city (6)
25 Avarice (5)
26 Stare open-mouthed (4)
28 Drink daintily (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD 12347

CRYPTIC
ACROSS: 4, Become 7, Eyepiece 8, Gan-g up 10, Alias (a.k.a.) 13, GI-St. 14, Bomb 15, P-EN-S 16, Bap 17, Boot 19, Esau 21, G-old watch 23, Yet-I 24, Elsa 26, Met 27, Vale 29, L-O-ad 32, Se-LL 33, Verge 34, Al-lure 35, Rounders 36, AD-vent.
DOWN: 1, Keba-B 2, Denim 3, Kiss 4, Be-gin 5, Can't 6, Ma-U Ma-U 9, Ass-ets 11, Low 12, Ab-B-ot 13, Get well 15, Pod 16, BA-h 18, Olive-R 20, Scale 21, Get 22, Ale 23, Yelled 25, Wag 28, Aler-t 30, Order 31, Dense 32, Sure 33, Vine.

EASY
ACROSS: 4, Sparse 7, Escargot 8, Etches 10, Croak 13, Bees 14, Earl 15, Fern 16, Vex 17, Tail 19, Nail 21, Pantomime 23, Mars 24, Vase 26, Dan 27, Whet 29, Noon 32, Seed 33, Adage 34, Suture 35, Dynamite 36, Versus.
DOWN: 1, Fence 2, Actor 3, Trek 4, Steer 5, Arcs 6, Shekel/Sheqel 9, Tennis 11, Rag 12, Altar 13, Beloved 15, Fit 16, Vie 18, Answer 20, Amend 21, Pan 22, Mat 23, Mature 25, Dog 28, Heeds 30, Oasis 31, Never 32, Suds 33, Adam.

◆SU-DO-KU-6823◆

			3				8	
		2		4			9	
	8			7				3
5				3		8		
8		3	4		9	2		6
		6		5				4
7				6			2	
	4			2		6		
	6				1			

hard

8	3	6	7	2	9	4	1	5
9	5	2	4	1	6	8	7	3
7	1	4	8	3	5	9	2	6
1	7	5	9	6	8	3	4	2
3	2	8	1	7	4	6	5	9
4	6	9	3	5	2	1	8	7
5	8	7	6	4	3	2	9	1
2	9	3	5	8	1	7	6	4
6	4	1	2	9	7	5	3	8

SOLUTION TO 6822

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE™

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C3 M3 A1 E1 A1 R1 Y4 — Double Word Score — RACK 1
L1 N1 I1 O1 P3 P3 N1 — RACK 2
A1 I1 L1 U1 A1 A1 Q10 — 1st Letter Triple — RACK 3
O1 S1 L1 O1 E1 P3 D2 — Triple Word Score — RACK 4

PAR SCORE 100-110
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL
TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION

I1 N1 C3 L1 U1 D2 E1 — RACK 1 = 66
W4 O1 O1 D2 S1 Y4 — RACK 2 = 26
P3 A1 N1 T1 H4 E1 R1 — RACK 3 = 62
M3 O1 U1 T1 E1 R1 S1 — RACK 4 = 77
JUDD'S TOTAL 231

PAR SCORE 155-165

HITORI-3277

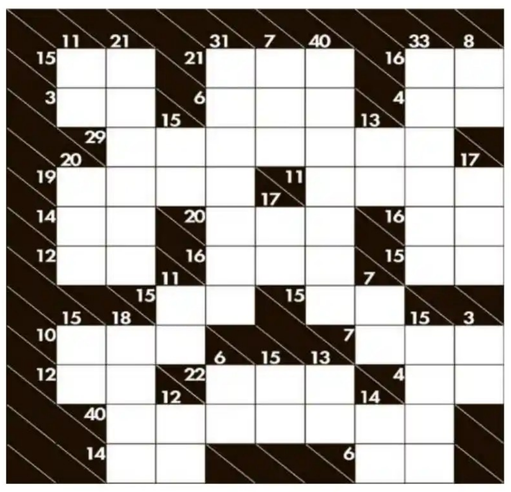
6	5	1	2	3	4	3	3
8	7	2	3	6	1	3	5
6	3	7	8	1	3	1	5
2	4	5	5	1	7	6	8
3	2	6	3	5	3	8	3
5	1	4	6	8	2	2	4
7	3	8	3	6	5	4	2
3	8	6	1	4	3	2	2

SOLUTION TO 3276

5	7	■	2	4	8	3	■
1	■	8	■	5	6	■	2
3	4	5	1	2	■	6	8
7	■	1	■	6	4	2	5
■	1	6	8	■	7	■	4
6	2	■	3	8	■	5	1
8	■	3	4	■	2	■	7
■	5	2	■	7	3	4	6

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3277



SOLUTION TO 3276

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X - 3819

7							9	■
	9					6	■	7
1		■				3		5
5			■		6			
			9	■				
			■		■	1	4	
	6	■			3	2		
	5				9	4	■	
9						5		■

SOLUTION TO 3818

5	4	7	9	6	1	3	2	8
6	8	9	5	2	3	4	1	7
3	1	2	4	7	8	6	9	5
9	6	1	3	8	2	5	7	4
7	3	5	1	9	4	8	6	2
8	2	4	7	5	6	1	3	9
1	9	3	2	4	5	7	8	6
2	5	6	8	1	7	9	4	3
4	7	8	6	3	9	2	5	1

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

Big tech companies investing heavily in AI to boost biz

AI firms projected to globally invest over $500 bn this year

UMA KANNAN
BENGALURU, DHNS

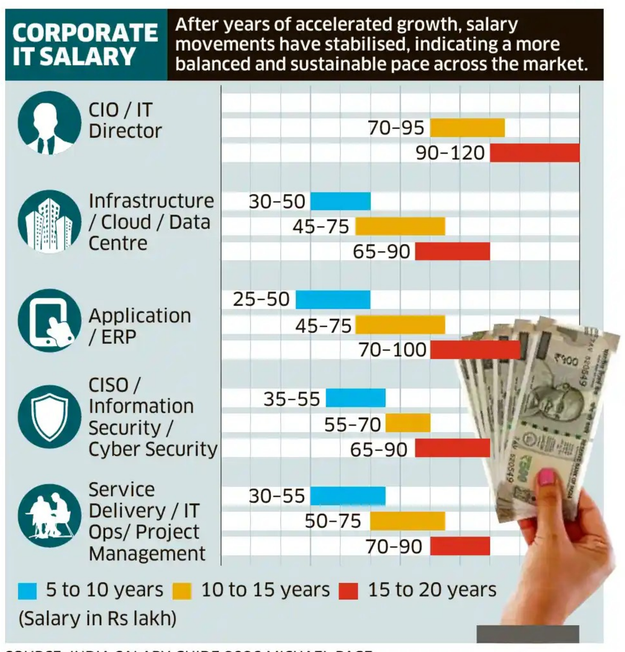
Big tech giants are now investing heavily in AI and new tools that could enhance their businesses. From Google and Microsoft, to Amazon and Oracle, everyone has increased their AI spending to expand their capabilities. Analysts noted signs of intensifying competition as companies aim to advance their AI offerings.

Google parent Alphabet recently announced that its capex spend this year will be more than double of what it was in 2025. "Overall, we're seeing our AI investments and infrastructure drive revenue and growth across the board. To meet customer demand and capitalise on the growing opportunities ahead of us, our 2026 capex investments are anticipated to be in the range of $175 billion-$185 billion," Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google and Alphabet, said during the company's Q4 earnings call.

According to Goldman Sachs, AI companies may invest over $500 billion in 2026. According to reports, both Amazon and OpenAI are engaging in discussions for a possible collaboration and that the former is reportedly in talks to invest up to $50 billion in the latter. Big tech giants are also collaborating or investing in AI companies such as Perplexity, Anthropic and OpenAI.

Indian IT services companies are upskilling their workforce to be AI-ready and are also collaborating with tech giants to win large deals. Last month, Infosys announced a collaboration with Cognition to accelerate the AI value journey for global enterprises. Cognizant has adopted Anthropic's Claude to help its enterprise customers and internal teams move from AI experimentation to scaled business outcomes.

AI models and tools continue to drive exponential innovation and rapid adoption. The recently-released Claude Cowork tool aims to automate work across functions such as legal, sales, marketing, and data analysis. However, concerns that such tools will significantly disrupt or eliminate the technology services sector, where India has a strong global presence, are misplaced, industry body Nasscom said.



SOURCE: INDIA SALARY GUIDE 2026 MICHAEL PAGE

"Indian technology services companies work closely with global enterprises that operate complex technology environments, with interconnected systems and fragmented data. Creating real business value from AI requires careful coordination, with humans in the loop who understand business context, industry knowledge, and enterprise workflows," it added.

AI is unlikely to be adopted as a simple "out-of-the-box" solution in large enterprises. Technology services companies have already accelerated their data and AI capabilities by investing in platforms, building partnerships with AI companies and hyperscalers, upskilling talent, and leveraging mergers and acquisitions.

With AI, new opportunities are emerging in areas such as legacy modernisation, AI-ready data foundations, and the use of intelligent agents across business and enterprise functions.

As enterprise AI adoption moves from experimentation to large-scale deployment, technology services companies will play a critical role in enabling this transition, Nasscom explained.

Kanishk Agrawal, CTO at Judge Group India, said AI investment is more critical than ever. Indian IT companies must shift from their legacy outsourcing model to that of an AI-native solution provider by embedding generative and agentic AI into their core service offerings, co-creating industry-specific platforms with their clients and creating measurable business outcomes for them as well. "By building on their internal AI expertise with continuing education, establishing MLOps practices and improving data governance, Indian IT companies will transform themselves from vendors to strategic partners," he added.

Meanwhile, Michael Page India in its report said professionals who prioritise upskilling and innovation are expected to play a defining role in shaping the next phase of India's growth.

Sensex tumbles 504 points ahead of RBI policy decision

Stock markets snap 3-day rally

MUMBAI, PTI

Benchmark indices halted their three-day rally to close with deep cuts on Thursday, in line with bearish global markets, as participants turned cautious ahead of the RBI policy announcement amid geopolitical uncertainties. Intense selling in metal, IT and capital goods stocks also dampened market sentiment, traders said.

In a bearish session, the 30-share BSE Sensex further dropped 503.76 points, or 0.60%, to settle at 83,313.93. During the day, it tanked 666.07 points, or 0.79%, to 83,151.62.

A total of 2,447 stocks declined, while 1,737 advanced and 158 remained unchanged on the BSE. The 50-share NSE Nifty declined 133.20 points, or 0.52%, to end at 25,642.80.

"Indian equities saw consolidation, as weakness was followed by a sharp rally in recent sessions, driven by optimism around the US-India trade deal, suggesting profit booking was at play. Global cues added further pressure, with concerns over a broad-based tech selloff in international markets and heightened US-Iran tensions leading to risk-off sentiment," Vinod Nair, Head of Research, Geojit Investments Limited, said.

All eyes on MPC meet

Market participants are now turning their attention to the upcoming RBI policy meeting, Nair added.

The decision of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) will be announced by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra on Friday.

From the Sensex constituents, Eternal, Bharti Airtel, BEL, ITC, Infosys, RIL, ICICI Bank, and Asian Paints were among the major laggards. In contrast, Trent, Tata Steel, SBI and Bajaj Finance were the gainers. Among sectoral indices, capital goods dropped 1.07%, metal (1.05%), consumer durables (0.88%), BSE Focused IT (0.78%), IT (0.76%) and telecommunication (0.72%). BSE PSU Bank and Oil & Gas were the gainers.

In Asian markets, South Korea's Kospi ended nearly 4% lower. Japan's Nikkei 225 index and Shanghai's SSE Composite index also ended in the negative territory, while Hong Kong's Hang Seng index settled higher. European markets were trading lower. US markets ended mostly lower on Wednesday.

Silver crashes 10% to Rs 2.68 L/kg on global selloff, strong dollar

NEW DELHI, PTI: Precious metal prices tumbled sharply in the national capital on Thursday, with silver slumping 10% to Rs 2.68 lakh per kg, and gold falling to Rs 1.6 lakh per 10 grams, triggered by a global selloff and a firm US dollar.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, silver nosedived by Rs 30,300, or 10.16%, to Rs 2,68,000 per kg (inclusive of all taxes), compared with Wednesday's closing level of Rs 2,98,300 per kg.

Gold of 99.9% purity also depreciated by Rs 4,500, or nearly 3%, to Rs 1,60,600 per 10 grams (inclusive of all taxes). It had settled at Rs 1,65,100 per 10 grams in the previous session.

Rupee rises 13 paise to close at 90.34/$

MUMBAI, PTI: The rupee appreciated 13 paise to close at 90.34 against the US dollar on Thursday, on trade deal optimism and overnight decline in commodity prices, even as the upside remained capped as investors look for more clarity on the India-US trade deal.

At the interbank forex, the rupee opened at 90.52 and touched an early high of 90.06 and a low of 90.53 against the greenback.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.29% higher at 97.90.

TMPVL posts net loss of Rs 3,483 cr

NEW DELHI, PTI: Tata Motors Passenger Vehicles (TMPVL) on Thursday reported a consolidated net loss of Rs 3,483 crore for the third quarter ended December 2025, impacted by the cyber incident at its British arm Jaguar Land Rover.

The company had posted a consolidated net profit of Rs 5,485 crore in the corresponding quarter of the last fiscal, TMPVL said in a regulatory filing.

Its consolidated total revenue from operations in Q3 stood at Rs 70,108 crore, compared to Rs 94,472 crore in the year-ago period, it added.

Total expenses in the quarter under review were Rs 74,880 crore against Rs 89,698 crore in the year-ago period, the company said.

TMPVL added that it incurred exceptional items of Rs 1,600 crore for Q3FY26 pertaining to the JLR cyber incident, new labour codes and stamp duty of Rs 800 crore, Rs 400 crore, and Rs 400 crore, respectively.

JLR's loss after tax in the quarter was 298 million pounds.

"We expect performance to significantly improve in Q4 with recovery at JLR and continuing growth in domestic market share," TMPVL Chief Financial Officer Dhiman Gupta said.

India, GCC resume free trade discussions after 15 years

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

India and the six-nation bloc Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) on Thursday signed the Terms of Reference (ToR) to re-launch talks on an FTA, which was suspended in 2011.

Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce Ajay Bhadoo and Secretariat General of the Gulf Cooperation Council Raja Al Marzouqi signed the ToR at a ceremony in New Delhi, in the presence of Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal. The ToR will guide the negotiations for the GCC-India FTA by defining its scope and modalities.

The negotiations for an India-GCC FTA was originally launched in 2004 with a framework agreement, followed by two rounds of talks in 2006 and 2008. However, discussions were suspended in 2011 after the GCC paused trade negotiations globally.

Goyal said the FTA deal with the GCC would "unleash new opportunities for Indian goods and services, MSMEs, entrepreneurs, skilled youth and professionals, and attract massive investments".

India has already signed bilateral free trade deals with the UAE and Oman and launched negotiations with Qatar. Other GCC members also include Bahrain, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal (centre) attends the signing of the Terms of Reference for the FTA between India and the GCC in New Delhi on Thursday. PTI

"With India deepening its trade engagements with the developed world, the stage is set for unlocking the full potential of a mutually-beneficial economic relationship with the GCC," Goyal said.

Marzouqi, who will be the chief negotiator from the GCC's side, said the signing of ToR marks the commencement of negotiations towards a mutually-beneficial FTA. Bhadoo will be the chief negotiator from India.

India's trade with the GCC stood at $178.56 billion in FY2024-25, accounting for 15.42% of India's global trade. Trade balance is heavily in favour of the GCC, primarily due to India's reliance on oil and gas to meet the domestic demands.

India imported goods worth $121.66 billion from the GCC during the fiscal ended March 2025, while India's exports to the region stood at $56.87 billion, as per data shared by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

India's imports from GCC countries primarily comprise crude oil, LNG, petrochemicals, and precious metals such as gold. Key exports from India to the GCC include engineering goods, rice, textiles, machinery, gems and jewellery.

Collectively, the GCC countries represent a market of 6.15 crore people (2024) and $2.3 trillion in terms of GDP at current prices, ranking 9th globally in this category. The GCC region is also a significant source of FDI for India, with cumulative investments exceeding $31.14 billion as on September 2025.

"The GCC is also home to nearly 10 million members of the Indian community. These strong and enduring people-to-people ties are further reinforced by the substantial presence of Indian companies across the region," the Ministry of Commerce and Industry said in a statement.

LIC Q3 profit rises 17% to Rs 12,958 crore

NEW DELHI, PTI: The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) on Thursday reported a 17% jump in net profit at Rs 12,958 crore in the third quarter ended December 2025.

The country's biggest insurer earned a net profit of Rs 11,056 crore in the year-ago period.

During the quarter, the net premium income of the insurer rose to Rs 1,25,613 crore from Rs 1,06,891 crore in the same period, a year ago, LIC said in a regulatory filing.

The total income also improved to Rs 2,33,984 crore in the latest December quarter, compared to Rs 2,01,994 crore in the same period, a year ago.

The insurer paid a net commission of Rs 6,011 crore as against Rs 5,966 crore in the third quarter of the previous financial year.

As regards new business, LIC garnered first year premium of Rs 10,605 crore as compared to Rs 7,285 crore in the same quarter a year ago.

Bharti Airtel profit more than halves to Rs 6,631 cr in Q3

NEW DELHI, PTI: Bharti Airtel on Thursday said its consolidated net profit plunged by about 55% to Rs 6,630.5 crore in the third quarter ended December 2025, mainly due to higher network operating costs, statutory fees and employees' expenses.

The company's consolidated profit, attributed to the owners of the parent, was Rs 14,781.2 crore in the year-ago period, according to a regulatory filing. Bharti Airtel's capital expenditure during the reported quarter grew by about 28% to Rs 11,787 crore from around Rs 9,161 crore in the December 2024 quarter. The company's capital expenditure in India grew by 16% to Rs 9,249.5 crore from Rs 7,979.5 crore.

The company's outgo on license fee and spectrum charges in the December 2025 quarter grew by about 7% to Rs 3,846 crore, from about Rs 3,570 crore. Expense on employees increased by 21% to Rs 1,958 crore from Rs 1,608 crore.

India's second-largest telecom company clocked a quarterly revenue from operations of Rs 53,982 crore, 19.6% higher than Rs 45,129.3 crore it posted in the year-ago period.

Airtel's India revenue grew to Rs 39,226 crore, up 13.2% on a year-on-year basis. The company's India mobile revenue recorded a 9.1% increase, led by improved realisations and a growing customer base.

Nykaa Q3 net surges to Rs 63 crore

NEW DELHI, PTI: FSN E-Commerce Ventures, the parent of Nykaa, on Thursday reported an increase in consolidated net profit to Rs 63.31 crore for the quarter ended December 2025.

It had posted a profit (attributable to equity shareholders of the parent firm) of Rs 26.12 crore in the December quarter of the previous fiscal. Revenue from operations rose 26.73%, to Rs 2,873.26 crore in Q3FY26, compared to Rs 2,267.21 crore in Q3FY25. On a quarter-over-quarter basis, Nykaa's profit and revenue rose 83.88% and 22.47%, respectively.

BioAsia to discuss AI, bio revolution

BENGALURU, DHNS: Life sciences forum BioAsia will host its 2026 conference themed 'TechBio Unleashed: AI, Automation & the Biology Revolution' on February 17-18.

The key discussions will focus on the structural headwinds for pharma and biotech (2026-2030), alongside a dedicated session on Telangana Rising Vision 2047, which will outline the state's roadmap for growth across AI-enabled R&D, and biomanufacturing.

Budget a 'game changer' for MSME sector, say industry chambers

BENGALURU, DHNS

Small industry leaders have termed the proposal to allocate Rs 10,000 crore equity capital to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), along with an additional Rs 2,000 crore equity capital allocation as a 'game changer'. This marks a shift from credit-heavy support to a more sustainable equity-based funding model, said KR Sekar, Past President & Mentor, Direct Taxes Expert Committee, BCIC, and Partner, Deloitte.

He also welcomed the renewed thrust on manufacturing through initiatives spanning biopharma, semiconductors, electronics system manufacturing, logistics corridors, and employment-intensive sectors such as textiles and tourism.

The Budget's emphasis on strengthening domestic manufacturing, scaling MSMEs, and bolstering infrastructure reflects a holistic development vision, noted BR Ganesh Rao, President, KASSIA.

Key announcements such as the SME Growth Fund, the top-up of Rs 4,000 crore to the Self-Reliance India Fund, and support measures integrated for traditional sectors are expected to provide critical impetus to the micro and small enterprises across the country, he said.

Renewed thrust on initiatives across varied sectors, including textiles, have been hailed by industry. REUTERS FILE PHOTO

"These measures aim to not only enhance capital access, but also nurture competitive, export-oriented, and tech-enabled small businesses, which form the backbone of India's industrial ecosystem," Ganesh Rao said.

Uma Reddy, President, Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FKCCI), said, "The Union Budget 2026-27 is a forward-looking and action-oriented Budget that reinforces India's growth momentum, while maintaining fiscal discipline. The strong thrust on manufacturing, IT sector boost, MSME financing, infrastructure expansion, and ease of doing business aligns well with the priorities of industry and employment generation."

'INFRA PUSH' APPROACH

FM's ninth Budget is about 3 Cs

S NARENDRA

The 9th consecutive Union Budget presented by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman against the backdrop of the Goldilocks scenario of over 7% GDP growth and all-time low inflation is about 3 Cs: cautious optimism, conservative and ensuring continuity of policy reforms and programmes initiated during the last few years.

The Budget 2026-27 (FY27), which comes into effect from April 1, 2026, continues to adopt the 'infra push' approach to bolster economic growth through the multiplier effect of employment, income, savings and investment cycle.

The heavy lifting of capital expenditure (CAPEX) has again been frontloaded with a huge allocation of Rs 12.20 lakh crore (Rs 11.11 lakh crore FY26) for infrastructure.

The nominal GDP growth for FY27 is estimated at 10% — around Rs 400 lakh crore (8% for the present financial year) — with a hawkish eye to achieve a fiscal deficit of 4.3% for FY27. This is highly commendable in a time of global uncertainties coupled with US President Donald Trump's tariff tantrums.

The Budget has proposed a tax holiday until 2047 to foreign companies providing 'cloud services' to customers anywhere in the world, with a rider that companies use data centre services based in India. This will strengthen 'services infra' and provide the right ecosystem for cloud computing, AI and machine learning. It will also push foreign companies to establish global capacity centres (GCC) in India.

With the railway budget allocation of Rs 2.81 lakh crore, the big proposal is to 'connect India' by building 7 high-speed rail corridors that will work as 'growth connectors'. Coupled with an allocation of Rs 10,000 crore for a new 'container manufacturing' scheme, this will supplement the holistic infra development of railways, roadways and waterways.

This 'growth pole' model will lead to the creation of employment, income and housing requirements, both in urban and tier II and tier III locations.

Continuing the thrust of supporting MSMEs as 'champions', the Budget dedicates a special fund of Rs 10,000 crore SME growth fund.

The Budget has not directly addressed the critical sector of affordable housing. This is because of the 'Big Bang' concessions accorded, the IT slabs revised during the previous budget and the GST slab revisions that came into effect from September 2025.

(The writer is a former banker)

TENNIS DAVIS CUP QUALIFIERS

Feeling better day by day: Nagal

Back after an injury, Indian ace ready to take on the Dutch

HITA PRAKASH
BENGALURU, DHNS

There was a sort of flutter when it came to light that India's top player, Sumit Nagal, is not in the best of shape ahead of an important home Davis Cup tie against the Netherlands. Those concerns were somewhat put to rest when the world No. 281 told the media on Thursday that extensive rehabilitation and structured on-court training sessions have helped him recover faster, ahead of the two-day fixture which kicks-off this weekend at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium.

"I'm feeling good, feeling better day by day," began Nagal.

"I have been working a lot the last two, three weeks. For me, the camp started right after Bangkok. Obviously, I didn't feel so good in Bangkok. I flew down the same night, started my rehab and, honestly, I don't have any complaints. I did whatever I could to get ready for the Davis Cup. I knew it was going to be a very important match. Yeah, pretty happy with how the last three weeks have been," he offered.

Following an extended pre-season, Nagal started his 2026 calendar at the ATP Challenger in Bengaluru, where he lost in the round of 16, before travelling to the Thailand Challenger. It was here on January 14 that Nagal suffered a hip tear and was forced to retire in the pre-quarterfinal with the score reading 2-2 in the first set against Japan's Rio Noguchi.

"Obviously, some thoughts of 'is it going to be okay? Is it not?' are going to be there. The fear is always there once you come out of an injury, and before playing the first match. You have to accept it for what it is and try to get better week by week and month by month.

"Honestly, it was a very good day for me (on Thursday). Everything felt good, and I'm looking forward to playing for India. I can't really step on the court and think of giving 80%, 90%... I'm going in as hard as possible."

The Haryana-born player is one of the most experienced of the lot and is leading India's campaign at the Davis Cup ties since Rohan Bopanna's retirement in 2023. He has Yuki Bhambri for company among relatively younger players in the mix whom he cautioned not to take tournaments such as this 'lightly'.

"I'm trying my best to be a great example. We (Yuki and him) had a good chat with the young ones in Switzerland (when India won) last year. And I think the younger generation now has taken things a little bit easy. I could be wrong. But I'm trying my best to lead. I think Yuki's probably doing the same thing."

India's Sumit Nagal during a practice session ahead of their Davis Cup Qualifiers Round 1 tie against the Netherlands at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium in Bengaluru on Thursday.
DH PHOTO/ PUSHKAR V

Mighty Mumbai test for confident Karnataka

After a win over Punjab, Padikkal & Co eye big scalp

G KRISHNAN
MUMBAI

The two teams that have won the Ranji Trophy title the most number of times lock horns in an exciting Ranji Trophy quarterfinal, starting Friday at the MCA-BKC ground, about 21km from the Wankhede Stadium, which is gearing up for the ICC Men's T20 World Cup starting Saturday.

Between them, they have 50 Ranji Trophy titles in 90 previous seasons -- Mumbai have won a record 42 titles while Karnataka are a distant second with eight. They have been runners-up on six other occasions each. These numbers emphasise Mumbai and Karnataka's pedigree and a contest between these two giants is one of the high-octane clashes in the domestic circuit.

Mumbai won the last of their 42 titles two seasons ago under Ajinkya Rahane. Karnataka lifted the last of their eight titles 11 seasons ago, in 2014-15 under R Vinay Kumar.

Karnataka made it to the quarterfinal at the expense of Saurashtra in Group B with a sensational win against Punjab last week, with the newly-appointed captain Devdutt Padikkal leading by example with a sparkling, unbeaten 120. Continuing his roaring form in the white-ball format this season, the 25-year-old Padikkal not only battled against the Punjab bowlers but also the fading light in Mohali. Had they played one more over and not met the target of 250, they would have missed the bus. The left-handed batsman's determined innings that helped Karnataka meet the target in just 28 overs and the subsequent celebrations showed how badly they wanted to win the Ranji Trophy this time.

"Yeah, definitely," Padikkal said here on Thursday when asked how badly he wanted to win the elusive title this year. "Every year when we play Ranji Trophy, we play to win it. Not much has changed this time either. Obviously, getting to the quarterfinal now, we know it's a good opportunity for us. We have a really good side. There is a really good mix of youngsters and guys who are experienced. Hopefully, we can do it this year." Karnataka also have the services of experienced Test batsman in KL Rahul and Karun Nair, back after missing the previous game due to a split webbing, while Mayank Agarwal, relieved of the captaincy, can fully focus on his batting and contribute in a big way.

Padikkal will lean heavily on the wicket-taking abilities of the lanky Prasidh Krishna and the wily leg-spinner Shreyas Gopal as the red soil here will suit them at different phases of the game.

Karnataka are well aware that it is not going to be easy against Mumbai in Mumbai. Test opener Yashasvi Jaiswal's presence will boost Mumbai, who fret over the availability of Sarfaraz Khan, who has been in the hospital for viral fever. While the Mumbai think-tank is confident Sarfaraz will be available, they have the necessary backup plans should he miss out.

That has been Mumbai's story this season with players including captain Shardul Thakur missing out due to injuries or some away on national duty. In all, 21 players turned up for Mumbai this season. Only stand-in captain Siddhesh Lad – also the fifth-highest run-getter in the country (737 runs at 92.12 with five hundreds)–Sarfaraz, his brother Musheer Khan, wicketkeeper Akash Anand and medium-pacer Tushar Deshpande played in all seven league matches.

Teams (from): Karnataka: Devdutt Padikkal (c), Mayank Agarwal, KL Rahul, Aneesh KV, Karun Nair, Smaran R, Shreyas Gopal, Kruthik Krishna, Venkatesh M, Vidyadhar Patil, Prasidh M Krishna, Mohsin Khan, Shikhar Shetty, Shrijith KL and Vidwath Kaverappa.
Mumbai: Shardul Thakur (c), Yashasvi Jaiswal, Musheer Khan, Akhil Herwadkar, Siddhesh Lad, Sarfraz Khan, Aakash Anand, Hardik Tamore, Sairaj Patil, Shams Mulani, Tanush Kotian, Tushar Deshpande, Mohit Awasthi, Omkar Tarmale, Divyansh Saxena and Suryansh Shedge.

Karnataka captain Devdutt Padikkal (left) with Mumbai opener Yashasvi Jaiswal on the eve of the Ranji Trophy quarterfinal at the MCA-BKC ground on Thursday.

Keerthana Pandian

India's Keerthana marches on

BENGALURU, DHNS

India's Keerthana Pandian stormed into the women's semifinals with a comfortable victory over Hong Kong's Chu Pui Ying in the Asian Snooker Championships in Doha on Thursday.

The 3-1 verdict helped Keerthana set up a mouthwatering semifinal showdown against former champion and compatriot Anupama Ramachandran, the reigning IBSF World champion.

Anupama took a tougher route to the last-four stage, overcoming Hong Kong's Yee Ting Cheung 3-2. Amee Kamani, the third Indian to make the knockouts, frittered away the advantage to go down 2-3, after being 2-0 up, to Hong Kong's Ho Yee Ki. After getting off to a slow start, Keerthana found her bearings as the match wore on to push her rival onto the backfoot with her clever play. She scored when she got her chances and then kept her on a tight leash when she lost position.

Results (Indians unless mentioned): Women (Quarterfinals): Keerthana Pandian bt Chu Pui Ying (HK) 3-1 (18-57, 39-29, 52 (36) -41, 51-24); Anupama Ramachandran bt Yee Ting Cheung (HK) 3-2 (32-60, 63 (62) -25, 62-26, 31-40, 52-18); Ho Yee Ki (HK) bt Amee Kamani 3-2 (23-51, 21-53, 44 (37) -1, 57 (30) -10, 52-36); Narantuya Bayarsaikhan (Mgl) bt Wan Ka Kai (HK) 3-0 (39-22, 60-46, 58 (38) -0).
U-21: Pre-quarters: Muhammad Wafi (Mas) bt Aarav Sancheti 4-1 (76-54, 75-64, 18-72, 72-1, 69-59).
League: Group F: Zhou Jinhao (Chn) bt Jabez Naveen Kumar 3-0 (70-31, 77-28, 91 (74) -0).
Group H: Rahul Williams bt Abdullah Al Qabbani (KSA) 3-2 (67-29, 39-72, 73-30, 0-75, 47-33).

India announce squad for FIH men's Pro League

NEW DELHI, PTI: Hockey India on Thursday announced a 24-member Indian men's team for the opening leg of the FIH Pro League to be held from February 10 to 15 at the Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Odisha.

Hockey India had announced a list of 33 probables last month for the coaching camp ahead of the season, which has now been pruned to a 24-member squad for the Rourkela leg of the event. The home leg will feature international heavyweights Argentina and Belgium besides India.

Squad: Goalkeepers: Suraj Karkera, Pawan.
Defenders: Amit Rohidas, Jarmanpreet Singh, Jugraj Singh, Harmanpreet Singh, Sumit, Sanjay, Nilam Sanjeep Xess, Amandeep Lakra.
Midfielders: Rajinder Singh, Manmeet Singh, Vivek Sagar Prasad, Hardik Singh, Moirangthem Rabichandra Singh, Nilakanta Sharma, Rosan Kujur.
Forwards: Abhishek, Sukhjeet Singh, Shilanand Lakra, Selvam Karthi, Mandeep, Araijeet Singh Hundal, Aditya Arjun Lalage.

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
U. R. RAO SATELLITE CENTRE
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP
HAL AIRPORT ROAD, VIMANAPURA POST,
BENGALURU - 560 017 (Phone: 080 2508-4185, 4156)
BRIEF TENDER NOTICES

1. On behalf of the President of India, item-rate tender is invited for the following works:

Description	Details	Details
Name of work	Supply, installation, testing & commissioning of Integrated Building Management System at AITF-2 building at URSC-ISITE Campus, Marathahalli, Bengaluru-560037	Improvement of landscape areas in front of VIP Canteen and Recharge Pond at ISITE Campus, Marathahalli, Bengaluru - Electrical works
E-Tender Notice	URSC/C&MG/E/M/18/2025-26 Dt. 02/02/2026	URSC/C&MG/E/M/19/2025-26 Dt. 02/02/2026
Estimated cost put to Tender	₹ 19.67 Lakhs	₹ 9.61 Lakhs
Period of completion in months	Eight (08) Months	Four (04) Months
Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)	₹ 39,340/- valid for 180 Days	₹ 19,220/- valid for 180 Days

2. Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting Tender (NIET) for eligibility criteria and other details in website: www.isro.gov.in and download the tender documents from www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO

Sd/-
Group Director, C&MG, URSC

MANGALORE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka undertaking)
Corporate Office, "MESCOM BHAVANA", Bejai, Mangalore - 575 004
Ph: 0824-2885796 CIN: U40109 KA 2002 SGC 030425

No: MESCOM/IT/66/2025-IT Date: 04.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION (Through KPP portal Only)

MESCOM invites the tender from the prospective bidders for **"Supply, installation and configuration of Zero Trust network security architecture to MESCOM offices"** vide Tender Enquiry No: **MESCOM/2025-26/SE0171.**

The interested eligible bidders may log on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/on** or after **09.02.2026.** For information about the KPP portal, contact the helpline at +91-8046010000/8068948777 or e-mail address: **support@eprochelpdesk.com.**

DIPR/DK/KSMCA/1531/25-26 dt: 05.02.2026

Sd/-,
Superintending Engineer (Ele) (Projects)

For Power Related Complaints & Assistance Call Toll Free Number 1912

ನಂದಿನಿ

ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಮತ್ತು ಚಿತ್ರದುರ್ಗ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಸಹಕಾರ ಹಾಲು ಉತ್ಪಾದಕರ ಸಂಘಗಳ ಒಕ್ಕೂಟ ನಿ., ಮಾಚೇನಹಳ್ಳಿ, ನಿದಿಗೆ (ಅಂಚೆ), ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ–577 222.

ದೂರವಾಣಿ: 08182–246161, 246162
E-mail: md_shimul@yahoo.com, shimuladmn@gmail.com Website: www.shimul.coop
ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ: ಶಿಮುಲ್/ಆಡಳಿತ–1/ನೇ.ನೇ–370/6198/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 05.02.2026

ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಕೆ ಕಾಲಾವಧಿ ವಿಸ್ತರಣೆ

ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ, ದಾವಣಗೆರೆ ಮತ್ತು ಚಿತ್ರದುರ್ಗ ಜಿಲ್ಲಾ ಸಹಕಾರ ಹಾಲು ಉತ್ಪಾದಕರ ಸಂಘಗಳ ಒಕ್ಕೂಟ ನಿ., (ಶಿಮುಲ್) ಶಿವಮೊಗ್ಗ ಇದರ ನೇರ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ.ಶಿಮುಲ್/ಆಡಳಿತ–1/ನೇ.ನೇ–370/4438/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14.11.2025 ರಂತೆ ವಿವಿಧ ವೃಂದಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ ವಿವಿಧ ವೇತನ ಶ್ರೇಣಿಗಳ 194 ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಅರ್ಹ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಂದ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದಂತೆ ಸಹಕಾರ ಸಂಘಗಳ ನಿಬಂಧಕರು, ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ, ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಇವರು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 02.02.2026 ರ ಪತ್ರ ಮುಖೇನ ನೀಡಿರುವ ಸೂಚನೆ ಮತ್ತು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 04.02.2026 ರಂದು ನಡೆದ ಒಕ್ಕೂಟದ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಸಮಿತಿ ಸಭೆಯ ತೀರ್ಮಾನದನ್ವಯ ಸದರಿ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಗೆ ಕಾರಣಾಂತರಗಳಿಂದ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸದಿರುವ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಅವಕಾಶ ವಂಚಿತರಾಗಬಾರದೆಂಬ ಸದುದ್ದೇಶದಿಂದ ಹಾಗೂ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಆದೇಶ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಸಿಆಸುಇ 262 ಸೇನೆನಿ 2025 ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 29.01.2026 ರನ್ವಯ ಹೊಸದಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ಪ್ರವರ್ಗಗಳ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಪ್ರಸ್ತುತ ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿರುವ ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ವಯೋಮಿತಿಯನ್ನು ಒಂದು ಬಾರಿಯ ಕ್ರಮವಾಗಿ (as a one-time measure) 05 ವರ್ಷಗಳ ಸಡಿಲಿಕೆ ನೀಡಿ ಒಕ್ಕೂಟದ ನೇರ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ.ಶಿಮುಲ್/ಆಡಳಿತ–1/ನೇ.ನೇ–370/4438/2025–26 ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14.11.2025 ರಂತೆ ವಿವಿಧ ವೃಂದಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಖಾಲಿ ಇರುವ ವಿವಿಧ ವೇತನ ಶ್ರೇಣಿಗಳ 194 ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳಿಗೆ ಕಾರಣಾಂತರಗಳಿಂದ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸದೇ ಇರುವ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 06.02.2026 ರಿಂದ 21.02.2026 ರವರೆಗೆ ಹೊಸದಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಇನ್ನೂ 15 ದಿನಗಳ ಕಾಲಾವಕಾಶವನ್ನು ನೀಡಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಅದರಂತೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14.11.2025 ರ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಗೆ ಪ್ರತಿಕ್ರಿಯಿಸಿ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿರುವ ಪರಿಶಿಷ್ಟ ಜಾತಿಗೆ ಸೇರಿದ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಕಂದಾಯ ಇಲಾಖೆಯಿಂದ ಹೊಸದಾಗಿ ನೀಡಲಾಗುತ್ತಿರುವ ಎಸ್.ಸಿ–ಎ, ಎಸ್.ಸಿ–ಬಿ, ಎಸ್.ಸಿ–ಸಿ ಜಾತಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಪತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸದೇ ಹಳೇಯ ಜಾತಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಪತ್ರಗಳನ್ನು ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿರುವುದರಿಂದ ಹಾಗೂ ಕೆಲ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳು ಭಾವಚಿತ್ರ ಇಲ್ಲದಿರುವ, ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡದಿರುವ, ಕಂಪ್ಯೂಟರ್ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಪತ್ರ, ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ಅನುಭವ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಪತ್ರ, ಜಾತಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಣ ಪತ್ರ, ವಯೋಮಿತಿಯ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳು, ಅಪೂರ್ಣ ಅಂಕಪಟ್ಟಿಗಳು (ಎಸ್‌ಎಸ್‌ಎಲ್‌ಸಿ, ಪಿಯುಸಿ, ಐ.ಟಿ.ಐ, ಡಿಪ್ಲೋಮಾ, ಪದವಿ ಮತ್ತು ಸ್ನಾತಕೋತ್ತರ ಪದವಿ), ನಿಗದಿಪಡಿಸಿದ ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಹತೆಯ ಅಂಕಪಟ್ಟಿ, ಕೋರಿರುವ ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ ಅನುಸಾರ ಅಗತ್ಯ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳು, ನಿಗದಿತ ನಮೂನೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ ಪ್ರಮಾಣಪತ್ರ ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡದಿರುವ ಮತ್ತು ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಅಸ್ಪಷ್ಟವಾಗಿ ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡಿರುವ ಹಾಗೂ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಕಾರಣಗಳಿಂದಾಗಿ ತಿರಸ್ಕೃತಗೊಂಡಿರುತ್ತವೆ.

ಈ ಹಿನ್ನೆಲೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14.11.2025ರ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಗೆ ಪ್ರತಿಕ್ರಿಯಿಸಿ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿರುವ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಮತ್ತೊಮ್ಮೆ ಅವರು ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಿರುವ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಎಡಿಟ್ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಂಡು ಮರುಪರಿಶೀಲಿಸಿ ಅಗತ್ಯ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳನ್ನು ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಅಪ್‌ಲೋಡ್ ಮಾಡುವುದಕ್ಕೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: 06.02.2026 ರಿಂದ 21.02.2026 ರವರೆಗೆ ಅವಕಾಶ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಉಳಿದಂತೆ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರದ ಆದೇಶ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ. ಸಿ�ఒ 147 ಸಿಸಿಬಿ 2022 ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 12.10.2022 ರಲ್ಲಿ ಅನುಮೋದಿಸಿದಂತೆ ನೇಮಕಾತಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿದ ವಿವರವಾದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ: 14.11.2025 ರ ನೇಮಕಾತಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಹೊರಡಿಸಿರುವ ಹುದ್ದೆಗಳ ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ, ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ ವರ್ಗೀಕರಣ, ಒಳ ಮೀಸಲಾತಿ, ವಿದ್ಯಾರ್ಹತೆ ಮತ್ತು ಅನುಭವ, ವಯೋಮಿತಿ, ಅರ್ಜಿ ಶುಲ್ಕ, ಆಯ್ಕೆ ವಿಧಾನ, ಅರ್ಜಿ ನಮೂನೆ, ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಬೇಕಾದ ದಾಖಲೆಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸುವ ವಿಧಾನ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿ ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ಎಲ್ಲಾ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ಒಕ್ಕೂಟದ ಅಧಿಕೃತ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ www.shimul.coop ರಲ್ಲಿ ನೀಡಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಆಸಕ್ತಿಯುಳ್ಳ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳು ಒಕ್ಕೂಟದ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್‌ಗೆ ಭೇಟಿ ನೀಡಿ ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು ಹಾಗೂ ನಿಗದಿತ ಅರ್ಜಿ ಶುಲ್ಕವನ್ನು ಆನ್‌ಲೈನ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರವೇ ಪಾವತಿಸತಕ್ಕದ್ದು. ಸದರಿ ನೇಮಕಾತಿಗಾಗಿ ಅಭ್ಯರ್ಥಿಗಳು ತಮ್ಮ ಅರ್ಜಿಗಳನ್ನು ಖುದ್ದಾಗಿ/ಅಂಚೆ/ಕೋರಿಯರ್ ಮೂಲಕ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಅವಕಾಶವಿಲ್ಲವೆಂದು ಈ ಮೂಲಕ ಸ್ಪಷ್ಟಪಡಿಸಿದೆ.

ಸಹಿ/–
ವ್ಯವಸ್ಥಾಪಕ ನಿರ್ದೇಶಕರು

FINANCE DEPARTMENT
Vidhana Soudha, Bangalore.

No. FD 25 JS(B&R) 2025 Bengaluru, February 06, 2026

PRESS COMMUNIQUE

It is notified for general information that the outstanding balance of **8.28% Karnataka SDL 2026** issued in terms of the Government of **Karnataka,** Finance Department Notification **No. FD 01 BMB 2018 Dated February 28, 2019** will be repaid at par on **March 06, 2026** with interest due up to and including **March 05, 2026.** In the event of a holiday being declared on the aforesaid date by any State Government under the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1881, the loan will be repaid by the paying offices in that State on the previous working day. **No interest will accrue on the loan from and after March 06, 2026**

2. As per sub-regulation 24 (2) and 24 (3) of Government Securities Regulations, 2007 payment of maturity proceeds to the registered holder of Government Security held in the form of Subsidiary General Ledger or Constituent Subsidiary General Ledger account or Stock Certificate shall be made by a pay order incorporating the relevant particulars of his bank account or by credit to the account of the holder in any bank having facility of receipt of funds through electronic means. For the purpose of making payment in respect of the securities, the original subscriber or the subsequent holders of such a Government Securities, as the case may be, shall submit to the Bank or Treasury and Sub Treasury or branch of State Bank of India, where they are enfaced / registered for payment of interest, as the case may be, the relevant particulars of their bank account.

3. However, in the absence of relevant particulars of bank account / mandate for receipt of funds through electronic means, to facilitate repayment on the due date, holders of **8.28% Karnataka SDL 2026** should tender their securities at the Public Debt Office, 20 days in advance. The securities should be tendered for repayment, duly discharged on the reverse there of as under:

"Received the Principal due on the Certificate".

4. It should be particularly noted that at places where the treasury work is done by a branch of the State Bank of India, the securities, if they are in the form of Stock Certificates, should be tendered at the branch of the bank concerned and not at the Treasury or Sub-Treasury.

5. Holders who wish to receive payment at places other than those where the securities have been enfaced for payment should send them duly discharged to the Public Debt Office concerned by Registered and Insured Post. The Public Debt Office will make payment by issuing a draft payable at any Treasury / Sub- Treasury or branch of State Bank of India conducting Government Treasury work in the State of **Karnataka.**

Sd/- (Ikram Shariff)
Joint Secretary to Government
(Budget & Resources), Finance Department

DIPR/CP/5413/Zen/2025-26

KARNATAKA ELECTRICITY REGULATORY COMMISSION
No. 16 C-1, Millers Tank Bed Area, Vasanthanagara, Bengaluru-560052. Phone: 080-22268677/78/79
Fax: 080-22268667 Email: kerc-ka@nic.in Website: https://kerc.karnataka.gov.in

No:KERC/B/01/19/2026 Date: 05.02.2026

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Sub: Public Hearing for APR proposal submitted by the Transmission / Distribution Companies for the financial year 2024-25.

The Electricity Supply Companies (BESCOM, MESCOM, CESC, HESCOM & GESCOM), Hukkeri Rural Electric Co-operative Society Limited, Mangalore Special Economic Zone (MSEZ) and AEQUS Special Economic Zone have filed applications for approval of APR for FY 2024-25. The Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Limited (KPTCL) has filed application before the Commission for approval of Annual Performance Review (APR) for FY 2024-25. The licensees have already published the summary of their proposal in the newspapers inviting objections from stakeholders and general public. The details of these proposals are available on the websites of the respective licensees and the Commission **(https://kerc.karnataka.gov.in)**

To elicit the views of the stakeholders/general public, the Commission will hold a "Public Hearing" on the date, time and venue mentioned hereunder: -

Sl. No.	Name of the Companies	Date & Time of Public Hearing		Venue
1	Chamundeshwari Electricity Supply Corporation Ltd.,(CESC)	16.02.2026 Monday	11.00 AM	Zilla Panchayath Hall, Mysuru.
2	Mangalore Electricity Supply Company Ltd., (MESCOM)	18.02.2026 Wednesday	11.00 AM	Conference Hall MESCOM Corporate Office, MESCOM, Dakshina Kannada, Mangaluru.
3	Mangalore Special Economic Zone Ltd., (MSEZ)			
4	Bangalore Electricity Supply Company Ltd., (BESCOM)	19.02.2026 Thursday	11.00 AM	Court Hall Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission, #16C-1, 1st Floor, Millers Tank Bed Area, Vasanthnagar, Bengaluru-560 052.
5	Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Ltd., (KPTCL)		3.00 PM	
6	Gulbarga Electricity Supply Company Ltd., (GESCOM)	23.02.2026 Monday	11.00 AM	Court Hall Deputy Commissioner's Office, Kalaburagi.
7	Hubli Electricity Supply Company Ltd., (HESCOM)	26.02.2026 Thursday	10.00 AM	Conference Hall, Corporate Office, Vidyut Bhavana, HESCOM, Gopana Koppa, Hubballi - 580 023.
8	AEQUS Special Economic Zone Pvt. Ltd., (AEQUS SEZ)	27.02.2026 Friday	3.00 PM	Virtual Hearing from Court Hall, Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission, #16C-1, 1st Floor, Millers Tank Bed Area, Vasanthanagar, Bengaluru-560052.
9	Hukkeri Rural Electric Co-operative Society Ltd., (HRECS)		3.30 PM	

Interested persons may participate in the public hearing and submit their oral/written views before the Commission, during the public hearing.

Sd/- Secretary
For Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission

DIPR/CP/YC/5440/2025-26

IN BRIEF

KPL golf from today

▸ The seventh edition of the month-long Karnataka Premier League (KPL-7) will get underway at the Karnataka Golf Association (KGA) from Friday, reports DHNS.

The competition will see a total of 24 teams, consisting of 18 players, with the majority of them being been picked via an auction.

After three rounds, the top 12 teams will advance to the final playoff, scheduled to take place on March 7.

India to host BJKC ties

▸ All India Tennis Association (AITA) on Thursday said the country has been given the hosting rights of the World Cup of Women Tennis 2026 Billie Jean King Cup Asia/Oceania Group I in April, reports PTI from New Delhi.

The event will be held at the newly renovated courts of the Delhi Lawn Tennis Association (DLTA) Complex from April 7-11. The tournament will be conducted in a round-robin format, with the top two teams earning promotion to the play-offs.

Stokes suffers facial injury

▸ England Test captain Ben Stokes has suffered a severe facial injury after being struck by a cricket ball, reports AFP from London.

The 34-year-old all-rounder posted a picture on Instagram showing his right eye heavily swollen and bruised, a graze on his cheek and lip, and a bandage stuffed in his nose.

"You should see the state of the cricket ball," read Stokes' caption of the picture, alongside a laughing face emoji.

CRICKET T20 WORLD CUP

We are going to Colombo: SKY

Our T20 mindset is similar in all competitions now, says Indian skipper

SIDNEY KIRAN
MUMBAI, DHNS

Captains pose with the ICC Men's T20 World Cup Trophy at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai and R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Thursday. The event will commence in India and Sri Lanka from Saturday. AI GENERATED PHOTO/ ICC

The build-up to the ICC T20 World Cup, scheduled to start on Saturday, has been turbulent to put it mildly. After an irked Bangladesh refused to travel to India, citing security reasons, forcing the governing body to replace them with Scotland, the Pakistan government dropped a bombshell by denying permission for its cricket team to play the marquee clash against India in Colombo on February 15.

Although the Pakistan Cricket Board, whose chairman Mohsin Naqvi is also the Interior Minister, has officially not conveyed its boycott decision to the ICC, the tweet from the Pakistan government last Sunday, reiterated on Thursday by their PM Shehbaz Sharif, has further stirred the pot.

India captain Suryakumar Yadav, who triggered a controversy when he refused to shake hands with his Pakistani counterpart Salman Ali Agha during the toss ceremony of the Asia Cup last September and even suggested there is no 'rivalry' between the two nations given how dominant the Men In Blue have been in recent years, toed the diplomatic line, saying his team would travel to Colombo as planned.

"Our mindset is pretty clear. We have not said no (to playing against Pakistan). They have. The ICC has given the fixture. The BCCI and the governments decided on a neutral venue if the two teams have to play each other. Our flight is booked to Colombo. We are going there, the rest we will see," a smiling Suryakumar said during the Captain's Day press conference at the BCCI headquarters at the Wankhede Stadium on Thursday.

"We will play the match on Feb 7 (against the USA). Then we will go to Delhi (for the Namibia game). After that, we will travel to Colombo," asserted the Indian skipper when probed about the mood in the Indian team, given all the outside noise regarding the fixture.

When asked for his opinion on the boycott and the recent flare-ups, Suryakumar felt those were beyond his control. "Their (Pakistan's) decision is not in my control. I wish I could make their decision. But then it's their call. We have been told that we have to play a game on the 15th. We played the Asia Cup, I think we played them three times and we played some good cricket against them. We won, we were very happy and similarly, if we get an opportunity again in Colombo, we will definitely play again."

Moving on from the Pakistan issue, Suryakumar said the team's goal is to continue playing fearless cricket and not be overawed by the occasion of the World Cup. "I think we have been playing some good brand of cricket for the last 2-3 years. We've been doing it for a while now, but the difference now is that our thinking has changed. Earlier, we used to play bilateral series one way and ICC events another. But now, be it the Asia Cup or an ICC event or bilateral, we play them all in the same fashion.

"Last time in 2024 (at the T20 World Cup), I didn't feel any difference in how we played the tournament in comparison to the build-up. Similarly, whatever cricket we've been playing in the last one year, we will try to play in ICC events. If we play well, we will get good results."

SLC urges PCB to reconsider Indo-Pak match boycott

Co-host Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) on Thursday urged its Pakistani counterpart PCB to reconsider the decision to boycott the high stakes India-Pakistan contest here on February 15 citing the heavy losses it would inflict on all the stakeholders of the T20 World Cup, reports PTI from Colombo.

Pakistan government announced the boycott of the marquee game against India in support of Bangladesh who withdrew from the World Cup citing concerns in India despite low threat perception from the International Cricket Council.

There could be a fresh twist to the drama now with SLC writing a letter to PCB.

SLC sources told PTI that its executive committee met on Tuesday and decided to write to the Pakistan Cricket Board, urging the Pakistanis to reconsider their controversial decision. The letter was eventually dispatched on Thursday.

In the letter, SLC warned the PCB of potential adverse impact on tourism including cancellations of hotel bookings, flight reservations.

The SLC also mentioned in the letter that it was ready to host the sellout fixture at the Premadasa Stadium.

In-form India eye record-extending sixth title

Mhatre's men take on strong England in finale today

HARARE, PTI

In pursuit of a record-extending sixth title, the Indian Under-19 cricket team would bank on its swashbuckling batting line-up when it takes on a gritty England in what promises to be an evenly-matched summit clash of the ICC Under-19 World Cup here on Friday.

LIVE ON STAR SPORTS, JIOHOTSTAR, 1.00 PM

India's successful chase of a massive total to humble Afghanistan in the semifinal where skipper Ayush Mhatre and opener Aaron George finally produced innings of substance, augurs well for the five-time champions, aiming to regain the trophy they last lifted in 2022.

India have shown tremendous resolve from the very first group match against the United States. In the semifinal, they decimated a hardened Afghanistan side to maintain an blemish-free record despite being in pursuit of a 300-plus target.

They now face another unbeaten team in England.

India will be aware that England have reached this far after knocking out defending champions Australia and will be high on confidence.

To pull off the win, India will need a collective performance befitting the quality in their line-up, studded with batting prodigy Vaibhav Sooryavanshi, whose firestorm approach has left opposition teams struggling for answers.

Sooryavanshi, who turns 15 next month, has already struck three half-centuries and a blazing century in the final could be the driving force that propels India to the title.

However, he will need to exercise caution against an England side boasting of a strong pace battery, led by Manny Lumsden, who has been pivotal to their campaign. He could prove more than a handful if India's top-order batters indulge in nonchalant shot selection.

India's record in the finals of the global age-group tournament has been brilliant. This marks their 10th appearance in the summit clash.

India skipper Ayush Mhatre (left) and his England counterpart Thomas Rew pose with the trophy, ahead of the U-19 World Cup final in Harare on Thursday. X

Lovlina clears first hurdle

ALICANTE (SPAIN), PTI: Olympic bronze medallist Lovlina Borgohain started her campaign with a confident blanking of Ukraine's Olha Pylypchuk, while Hitesh Gulia also rolled on as Indians extended their strong run in the BOXAM Elite International 2026 here.

In the women's 75kg category, Lovlina was in her commanding self, pipping Ukraine's Olha Pylypchuk 5:0.

She controlled the bout throughout, combining sharp combinations with disciplined movement to ease into the next round.

In the men's 70kg section, Hitesh continued his impressive form, shutting out Canada's Vincent Santoriello with a dominant 5:0 verdict.

Apart from Lovlina, India's other women's boxers delivered a series of convincing performances.

Manju Rani (48kg) cruised past France's Gloria d'Almeida 5:0, while Nitu (51kg) made quick work of Spain's Laura Calderon, forcing an RSC in Round 1.

Kusum (51kg) followed the suit, edging Spain's Claudia Alcaniz 4:1, and Arundhati Choudhary (70kg) continued her fine run with a clean 5:0 win over Kazakhstan's Aziza Issina.

◆ ON TV ◆

CRICKET

U-19 WC Final: India vs England **(1 pm)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Network**, **JioHotstar**.

T20 World Cup warm-ups: Italy vs UAE **(3:00 pm)**, Namibia vs India A **(5:00 pm)**. **LIVE** on **JioHotstar.**

Ranji Trophy Quarters: Mumbai vs Karnataka, MP vs J&K, Jharkhand vs Uttarakhand, Bengal vs Andhra **(day 1, all 9:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Khel, JioHotstar.**

FOOTBALL

EPL: Leeds vs Nottingham **(1:30 am, Saturday)**. **LIVE** on **Star Sports Select 1**, **JioHotstar**.

SHOOTING

Asian Rifle/Pistol C'Ships: 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team **(10:30 am)**. **LIVE** on **FanCode**.

T20 WORLD CUP: GROUP A PREVIEW

Champions India are the team to beat

SIDNEY KIRAN
MUMBAI, DHNS

During a recent event in Bengaluru, the legendary Rahul Dravid remarked that India were 'playing T20 cricket at a different level' compared to their rivals and predicted the Men in Blue to reach the semifinals. What happens after that depends on how well they play on that day, reckoned the batting great who was the coach when the Men in Blue lifted the T20 World Cup for the second time in Barbados in 2024.

Dravid, who is precise with his words, was overstating the fact. Even the reticent MS Dhoni said India is "one of the most dangerous teams". In fact, given how India have ruthlessly dominated the shortest format despite their struggles in the other two under coach Gautam Gambhir and captain Suryakumar Yadav's partnership, that's been the unanimous opinion amongst most pundits.

Ever since joining forces after the 2024 World Cup triumph, Gambhir and Suryakumar have turned the Indian team into a ruthless winning machine, winning 31 of the 39 games for a whopping win percentage of 79.48. No major team even comes close to that statistic.

The key to that success has been the fearless cricket the team has been playing, irrespective of who the opponents are or what the conditions are. Even if there is a top-order collapse, which is bound to occur in brake-free batting, someone from the middle or lower order puts his hand up and delivers to ensure the template isn't disturbed.

That blueprint was first conceived during the Rahul Dravid-Rohit Sharma era, when the latter led from the front with his blistering batting from the get-go. Now this team has just taken it to a different level with the likes of Abhishek Sharma, Ishan Kishan, Tilak Varma, Hardik Pandya and Shivam Dube constantly entertaining the fans with soaring sixes and rasping fours.

The only concern has been the spinners' -- Varun Chakravarthy and Kuldeep Yadav -- performances. Both are vital cogs in the attack, given their ability to pick wickets in the middle overs, but they not only struggled to provide breakthroughs against the Kiwis but were also expensive, going at 9 runs an over. With dew expected to play a part, it remains to be seen how they bounce back.

India's biggest 'rival' in the group is Pakistan, but the much-hyped clash, despite the former boasting of a superior head-to-head record, may not take place as the latter's government has boycotted the clash in Colombo. Although the ICC is yet to receive an official communication on that front, Pakistan's decision to do so may end up jeopardising their chances of advancing to the Super8.

The group also comprises the USA, Netherlands and Namibia, and the first two definitely possess the ammunition to stun former champions Pakistan, considering their tendency to be brilliant one day and ordinary another. Mind you, the US beat Pakistan via Super Over in the last World Cup, and the minnows eventually made it to the second phase at the expense of the Asians. So the PCB has a lot of thinking to do before it gives its final word to the global body, which has already expressed its unhappiness over Pakistan's selective participation in the marquee event.

Like last time, the US, made up primarily of Indian expats who played age-group cricket here before moving West for various reasons, will be gunning to produce another shocker against the big two. If they are able to achieve that and beat fellow Associate nations, then another second-round berth awaits.

The Netherlands, too, will be gunning for the same as the Americans, while Namibia would be hoping they aren't the battering rams.

Record in T20 Internationals

	India	Pakistan	USA	Netherlands	Namibia
Matches	267	292	54	128	84
Won	185	170	31	64	52
Lost	74	115	21	59	31
No result	8	7	2	5	1

Suruchi-Samrat clinch air pistol mixed silver

NEW DELHI, PTI: Reigning world champion Samrat Rana and World Cup Final winner Suruchi Singh joined forces to clinch silver in 10m air pistol mixed team event as India extended their domination in the Asian Shooting Championship with their gold count reaching 10 here Thursday.

Southpaw Rashmika Sahgal and Vanshika Chaudhary, in the 10m air pistol women junior, and Priyanshi Purva and Chahek Kohla, in the corresponding youth category also delivered back-to-back 1-2 finishes.

Their combined efforts saw India finish the second competition day with a rich haul of 10 gold, five silver and one bronze medal, far ahead of Uzbekistan, who are second on the table with three gold.

Uzbekistan's lone gold of the day came from the 10m air pistol mixed team pair of Nigina Saidkulova and Mukhammad Kamalov, who prevailed over Samrat and Suruchi by 481.3 to 479.6, in the 48-shot final.

The Indian pair had earlier topped the 10-team qualification round with a total of 583 after 60 shots.

Three more teams, Vietnam (582, 2nd) and Chinese Taipei (575, 4th), besides Saidkulova and Kamalov, followed them into the final.

The race to medals brought the best out of the Uzbeks and they were the only team in the final, where both shooters individually registered an average of over 10.0 per shot over 24 shots, upstaging the home favourites in a nervy finish. Chinese Taipei won bronze.

Suruchi Singh (left) and Samrat Rana.

City set up final with Arsenal

MANCHESTER (UK), AFP: Manchester City will face Arsenal in the League Cup final after ending Newcastle's reign as holders with a first-half blitz in their 3-1 victory on Wednesday.

Pep Guardiola's side were already in pole position after winning the semi-final first leg on Tyneside in January and they finished the job in ruthless fashion at the Etihad Stadium.

Omar Marmoush **(in pic)** struck twice in the first half of the second leg, either side of a goal from Tijjani Reijnders.

Anthony Elanga reduced the deficit after the interval, but City's 5-1 aggregate win sent them back to the League Cup showpiece for the first time since 2021.

City's final date with Arsenal is set for March 22 at Wembley after the Premier League leaders knocked out Chelsea on Tuesday.

Athletic, Sociedad win

Inaki Williams scored six minutes into stoppage time as Athletic Bilbao scored a 2-1 win at Valencia to reach the semifinals of the Copa del Rey on Wednesday, and their Basque Country rival Real Sociedad made it to the last-four by winning 3-2 at Alaves.

Athletic will be playing in their sixth Copa semifinal in seven seasons.

They won the title in 2024 and was runner-up to Barcelona in 2020-21 and to Sociedad in 2019-20.

Karnataka's Poojari lifts national title

MODINAGAR (UP), PTI

Gururaja Poojari

Two-time Commonwealth Games medallist Gururaja Poojari showcased his experience and class with a clinical performance to win the senior men's 60kg gold medal on the second day of the IWLF National Youth, Junior and Senior Weightlifting Championships here on Thursday.

The Karnataka lifter, who had claimed silver in the 56kg category at the 2018 Commonwealth Games and followed up with a bronze in the 61kg division at the 2022 edition, finished with a commanding total of 269kg to top the podium.

Poojari lifted 119kg in the snatch before sealing the contest with a top lift of 150kg effort in the clean and jerk.

Manipur's Ch Rishikanta Singh pushed him closely with an identical 119kg in snatch but managed 147kg in the clean and jerk to settle for silver with an overall 266kg, while Services' S Guru Naidu (265kg) took the bronze.

Indian teams enter quarterfinals despite losses

QINGDAO (CHINA), PTI: India's men's and women's teams advanced to the quarterfinals despite suffering narrow 2-3 defeats to Japan and Thailand respectively in their final group ties at the Badminton Asia Team Championships here on Thursday.

The defending champion women will face hosts China, while the men will take on South Korea in the last-eight stage.

The Indian women, who had opened with a 5-0 sweep of Myanmar, began strongly but lost momentum after taking a 2-0 lead against Thailand.

World No. 42 Tanvi, a member of India's historic gold medal-winning team at the 2024 edition, stunned world No. 16 Busanan Ongbamrungphan 21-14, 17-21, 21-18 in a gripping contest lasting one hour and three minutes.

The doubles pair of Gayatri Gopichand and Treesa Jolly then battled past world No. 65 Tidapron Kleebyeesun and Nattamon Laisuan 21-14, 20-22, 21-11 to hand India a 2-0 lead at the Qingdao Conson Gymnasium.

However, Rakshitha Ramraj failed to get past 19-year-old Pitchamon Opatniputh going down 19-21, 17-21 as Thailand pulled one back to trail 1-2.

Having already qualified, Indian men rested Lakshya Sen and Kidambi Srikanth against Japan.

CRICKET WOMEN'S PREMIER LEAGUE

Royal night for Challengers

Mandhana's girls down Delhi to wear the crown for second time

VADODARA, PTI

Displaying absolute dominance, a Smriti Mandhana-inspired Royal Challengers Bengaluru lifted their second Women's Premier League trophy with a six-wicket victory over Delhi Capitals, who failed to seize the moment on the biggest stage despite playing in their fourth final here on Thursday.

RCB captain Mandhana looked in imperious touch on way to a magnificent 87 off 41 balls, while Georgia Voll smashed 79 in 54 deliveries during a 165-run partnership for the second wicket with her skipper, which paved the way for a memorable title triumph.

This was after skipper Jemimah Rodrigues rose to the occasion with a scintillating half-century and Chinelle Henry blazed away to a 15-ball 35 to lift Delhi Capitals to an imposing 203 for four.

Laura Wolvaardt (44 not out off 25 balls) and Lizelle Lee (37 off 30 balls) also made quick runs after DC were put in. Rodrigues slammed 57 off 37 balls.

In reply, RCB completed the record chase with two balls remaining while joining Mumbai Indians as the most successful teams in the WPL.

In the stiff chase, RCB lost the big wicket of Grace Harris (9) early but skipper Smriti Mandhana and Georgia Voll kept them in the contest by scoring quickly and keeping pace with the required run rate.

Both Mandhana and Georgia drove anything that was pitched up with ease, pulled and cut the short balls with authority as RCB reached 100 exactly at the halfway mark. requiring 104 runs in 60 balls.

Meanwhile Mandhana, having just hit two sixes, raced to her fifty in 23 balls with a sublime boundary against Sneh Rana.

Voll was also at her best at the other end, dispatching everything that was in her arc with utter disdain.

The equation came down to 54 of 36 balls after Mandhana smashed Shree Charani for two boundaries to take RCB to 150 in 14 overs.

The two continued to dominate until Voll gave her wicket away to Minnu Mani, raising DC hopes. However, RCB held their nerves to emerge winners.

Earlier, the Royal Challengers were on the money in the first three overs with Lauren Bell and Sayali Satghare conceding just nine runs as Shafali Verma and Lee did not get enough width to free their arms.

However, the fourth over bowled by Satghare saw the Capitals release the pressure with Lee clobbering the medium pacer's half-volley and half-tracker two successive sixes -- one over long-off and another over mid-wicket.

There was then an appeal for a stumping thanks to Richa Ghosh's enterprise and it was followed by Satghare failing to latch on to a difficult caught and bowled chance, ending an eventful over that yielded the Capitals 20 runs and gave them the much-needed momentum after the sluggish start.

With DC reaching 36 after five overs, skipper Smriti Mandhana introduced Arundhati Reddy into the attack and Shafali straightaway collected two fours. However, Reddy hit back with the wicket of Shafali with a short ball, which was smartly taken by Ghosh behind the stumps.

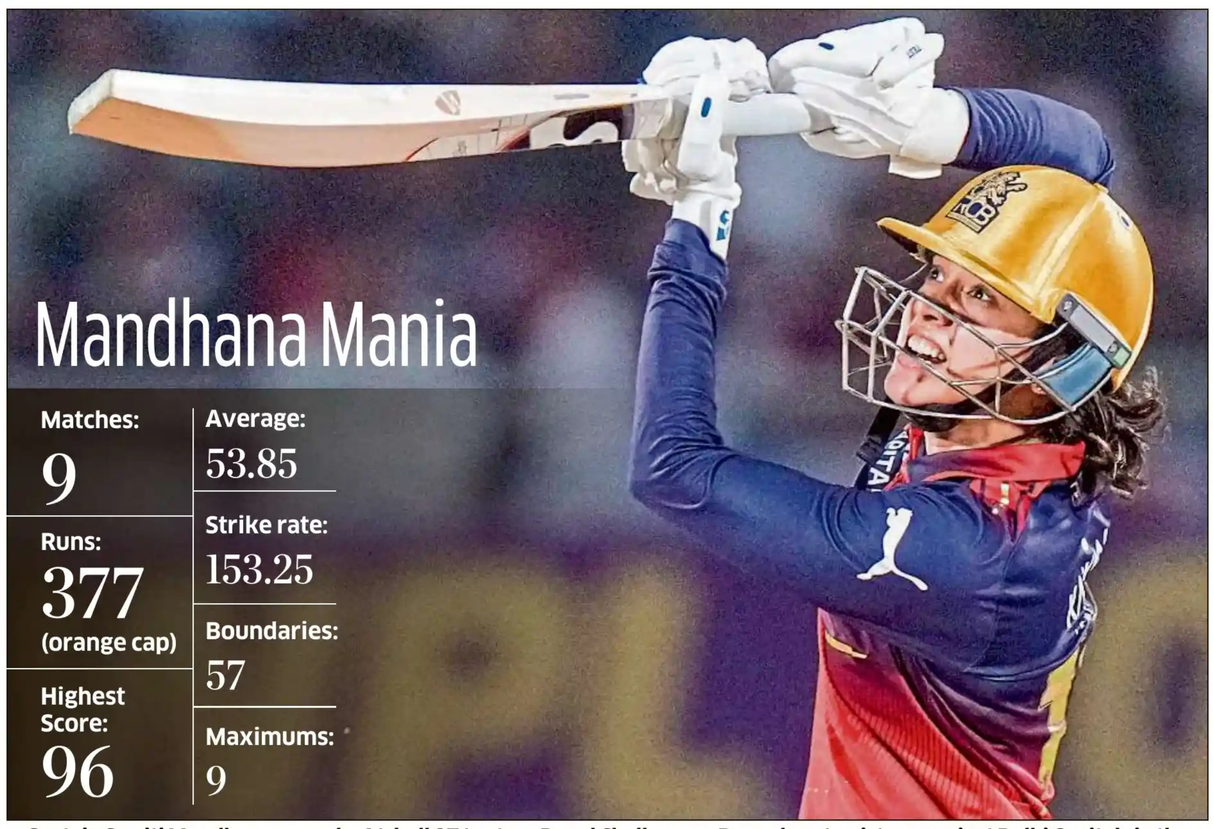
The classy Laura Wolvaardt began with an exquisite boundary before Lee welcomed of-spinner Shreyanka Patil into the attack with two fours and a six on the trot, lifting DC to 72 for one in seven overs.

It took compatriot Nadine de Klerk to end the dangerous Lee's stay in the middle, as the opener skied one for Grace Harris to run in from long-on to complete a clean catch.

Rodrigues joined Wolvaardt, and the duo found the gaps at will with their stylish batting to keep RCB under pressure with a partnership of 76 runs.

In the end though, RCB had the last laugh, once again, in a rematch of the 2024 final.

Brief scores: Delhi Capitals: 203/4 in 20 overs (Lizelle Lee 37, Laura Wolvaardt 44, Jemimah Rodrigues 57, Chinnelle Henry 35) lt to Royal Challengers Bengaluru: 204/4 in 19.4 overs (Smriti Mandhana 87, Georgia Voll 79; Chinelle Henry 2-34). **Result:** RCB won by 6 wkts. **PoM:** Smriti Mandhana.



Captain Smriti Mandhana scored a 41-ball 87 to steer Royal Challengers Bengaluru to victory against Delhi Capitals in the Women's Premier League final at the Baroda Cricket Association Stadium, Kotambi in Vadodara on Thursday. PTI

WPL Honours

2023: **Mumbai Indians**
2024: **Royal Challengers Bengaluru**
2025: **Mumbai Indians**
2026: **Royal Challengers Bengaluru**

"It is very special for me. My comeback WPL season and couldn't have asked for anything more or better. Want to thank each and every member who cheered us, and also the people back home in Bengaluru and Karnataka.
SHREYANKA PATIL

"Everyone is very happy. This team has worked very hard. The management has backed the players and given us whatever we asked for. This win is for them.
RADHA YADAV

"Super happy we could get the win. Would have been better to finish off. To play that way in the final, could not have hit the ball better. To perform in the final is super special.
GEORGIA VOLL

daCunha/AB/1080

State shuttlers Tushar, Rujula progress to quarterfinals

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnataka's Tushar Suveer and Rujula Ramu progressed to the quarterfinals of the men's and women's singles competitions in the Yonex-Sunrise All-India Senior-ranking Badminton tournament at the Karnataka Badminton Association here on Thursday.

In the pre-quarterfinals, eighth seed Tushar defeated Gujarat's Adheep Gupta 21-17, 19-21, 21-9 while the fourth seed Rujula beat Delhi's Anwesha Gowda 21-15, 21-17.

Karnataka's Raghu M also marched into the quarters after handing ninth seed Arya Bhivpathaki of Maharashtra a 21-11, 22-24, 21-12 defeat.

Top seeds Ginpaul Sonna and Mansi Singh as they advanced by beating Abhinav Garg and Purva Barve, respectively.

Results: Men's Singles: (Prefix denotes seeding, Karnataka unless mentioned): 8-Tushar Suveer bt Adheep Gupta (Guj) 21-17, 19-21, 21-9; 1-Ginpaul Sonna (Del) bt Abhinav Garg 21-12, 21-18; Prajwal Sonawane (Mah) bt Ansh Negi (Utr) 21-8, 21-15, Pranay Katta (Raj) bt Madhurr Dhingra (Del) 22-20, 17-21, 21-14; Raghu M bt 9-Arya Bhivpathaki (Mah) 21-11, 22-24, 21-12; Dhruv Negi (Utr) bt Abhinav Thakur (Pun) 21-15, 21-8; Alap Mishra (MP) bt 10-Manish Phogat (Raj) 16-21, 21-19, 21-19; Ravi (Har) bt Saahas Kumar Potipi Reddi (Ts) 21-9, 21-14.

Women's Singles: 4-Rujula Ramu bt Anwesha Gowda (Del) 21-15, 21-17; 1-Mansi Singh (UP) bt Purva Barve (Mah) 21-14, 21-17; Parul Choudhary Raj bt Meghana Reddy M (Ts) 16-21, 21-8, 21-13; Tasnim Mir (Guj) bt Akanksha Matte (AP) 21-16, 21-9; Adarshini Shri NB (TN) bt Shaina Manimuthu (Kar) 21-16, 21-12; Shruthi Mundada (Mah) bt Rishika Nandi (Del) 16-21, 23-21, 21-13; Pavithra Naveen (Ker) bt Amolika Singh (UP) 23-21, 21-18; Tanishq M (AP) bt 9-Rijul Saini (Chg) 21-12, 15-21, 21-16.

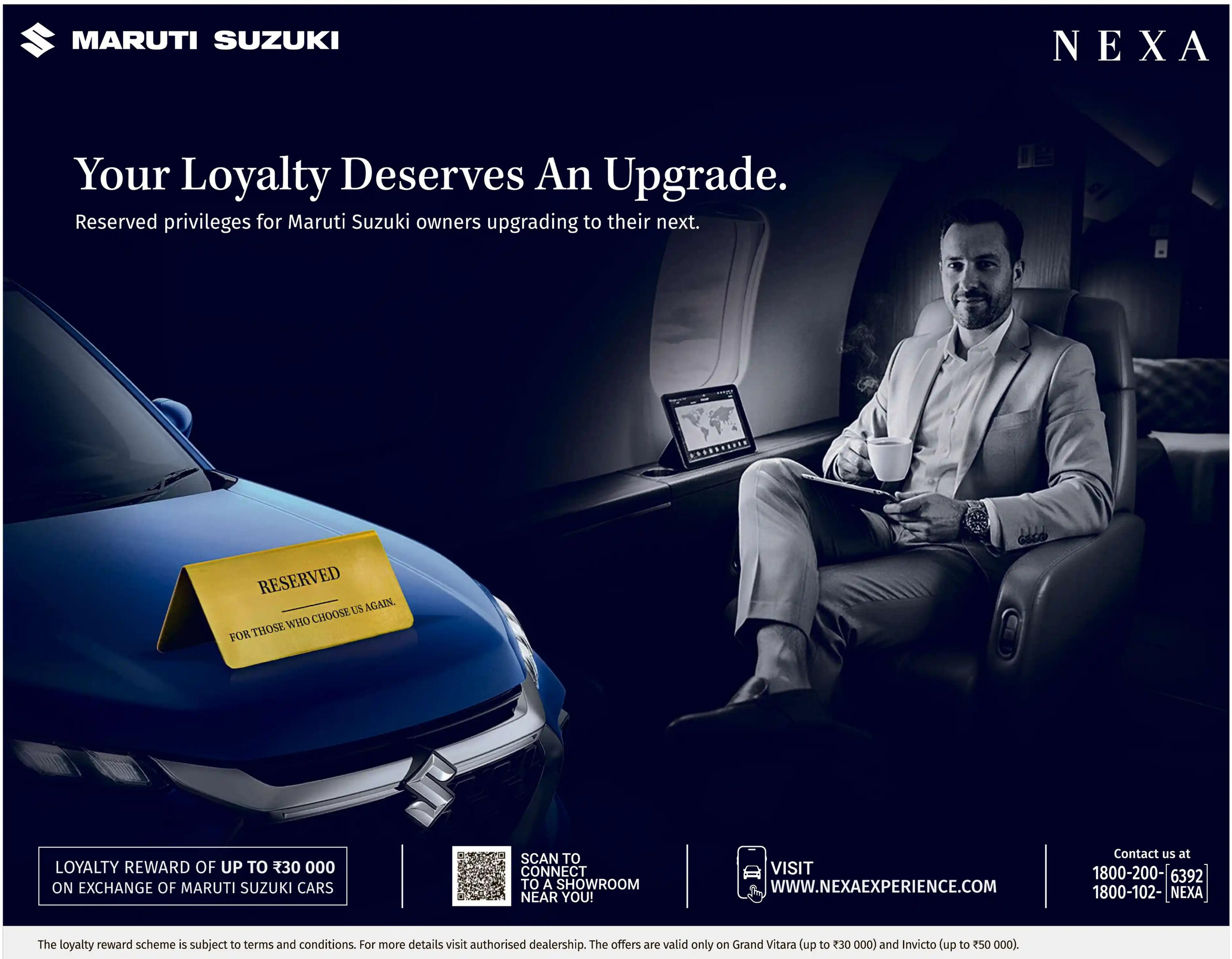
Rujula Ramu. DH FILE PHOTO

Pavandeep stars for Karnataka

BENGALURU, DHNS: Pavandeep Bharadakane scored a rapid double century as Karnataka dominated Goa on the opening day of their U-14 South Zone tournament match in Vizianagaram.

Pavandeep, who belted 42 fours and two sixes, scored 235 off just 150 balls to take Karnataka to 406/1 declared in 50 overs with Prabhav Pydah contributing a 118-ball 146 not out from the other end. In response, Goa ended the day at 66/3 in 25 overs.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 406/1 decl in 50 overs (Pavandeep R Bharadakane 235, Prabhav Pydah 146 n.o.) vs Goa: 66/3 in 25 overs (Cheran Tej Raju 3-25).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